

## REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED
May 95		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Tearing at the Fabric - A spiritual Journey through Crisis & Trauma		5. FUNDING NUMBERS
6. AUTHOR(S) James R. Dixon & Karen H. Stocks		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) AFIT Students Attending:		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER AFIT/CI/CIA
		95-034
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AFIT/CI 2950 P STREET, BDLG 125 WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB OH 45433-7765		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release IAW AFR 190-1 Distribution Unlimited BRIAN D. GAUTHIER, MSGT, USAF Chief Administration		12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE <b>DTIC SELECTED JUN 19 1995 F</b>
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)		
14. SUBJECT TERMS		15. NUMBER OF PAGES 101
		16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT
		20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

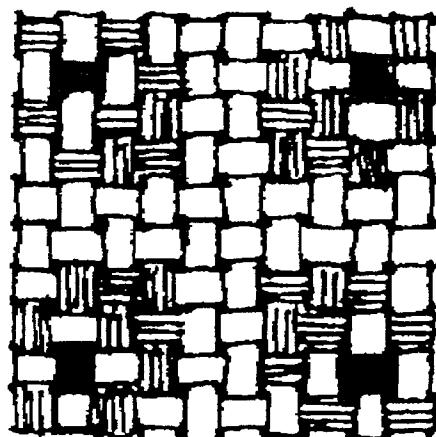
Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-69)  
Prescribed by GSA GEN. REG. 27 CFR 15

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 6

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# TEARING AT THE FABRIC

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Distribution /	
Availability Codes	
CRA	Avail. and / or Special
A-1	



a Spiritual Journey  
through  
Crisis & Trauma

James R. Dixon, Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF  
&  
Karen H. Stocks, Chaplain, Major, USAF

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## **~DISCLAIMER~**

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## **~INTRODUCTION~**

Do not read this book! Dig into it, instead. Let it dig into you. Discover kernels of empowerment and inspiration for ministry during horrific times. Uearth tools to navigate as the presence of the "Holy" in a myriad of "unholy" situations. Tear into the fabric of trauma and crisis.

Crisis and trauma ministry are us. When tragedy strikes at the core of a base, we are there. When hopelessness rips at the hearts of individuals, we are there. When deployment severs the peace of home and family, we are there. Quite simply, we render emotional and spiritual support and comfort victims. Quite arduously, we position ourselves side by side in the immediate life situation of those afflicted with mind boggling and heart wrenching circumstances. And frequently, we find ourselves caught up in empathetic whiplash and sympathetic traction.

Our intention is that you find this sampler of crisis and trauma ministry techniques, meditations and recommendations as helpful as we have in our work at Chicago's Rush University and Cook County Hospital's Trauma and Burn Units. Use this resource as you would the "blue book" of prayers - often, for your people and yourself. Generate ideas from it, employ it as a devotional, lean on it as necessary, carry it on deployments, edit and update it; and most of all, share your counsel and revisions.

We are convinced that in service to the One who calls us and to the ones who call upon us, the chaplaincy has a singularly unique expertise to provide in response to critical incidents and traumatic events - spiritual healing that restores hope, trust, and community. It is our ministry. It is a journey.

Join the journey. Travel with Navy, Army, and Coast Guard Chaplaincies already structurally entrenched in the distinctive quest for life's meaning and values during the throes of horrendous phenomena. It is our ministry. It is a struggle.

Join the struggle. Travel with victims and survivors as they struggle to weave their way along desert highways, low valleys, high mountains, rough ground and rugged terrain amidst crisis and trauma. Turn the page for their stories .... and yours.

## **~ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS~**

This penned project did not materialize easily. Blood, sweat and tears shed physically and emotionally by persons face to face with their own or others' crises served as a catalyst to propel us beyond operational checklists and on to a spiritual quest through valleys of shadows and trauma. We have not been without assistance along this sojourn. For that we are grateful.

To military members and families numbered among crisis and trauma victims and survivors and rescuers, thank you for letting us be there with you and for helping us realize that trauma may linger or resurface with "the rest of the story." Appreciation is extended to colleagues wearing the chaplain's insignia who boldly responded to our queries about "what do you need in order to do crisis and trauma ministry" by flagging protocol and ritual concerns for those critical and precarious occasions.

We are especially indebted to a dedicated group of crisis, trauma and stress professionals. Carolyn Burns and Ed Petak of the Northern Illinois and Joliet, IL, Saint Joseph Medical Center Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Teams; Rev. Thomas A. Mulcrone, Chaplain, Chicago Fire Department; Fr. John A. Jamnicky, Administrator, Chicago O'Hare International Airport Chapel; Rev Bernard White, Chaplain, Chicago Police Department; Rance J. Powers, Corporation Safety and Greg Couper, Director of Customer Service, United Airlines Executive Offices, Chicago, IL; and Donna Adair, Rush University, Chicago, IL, doctoral psychiatric nursing candidate and former military flight nurse. They provided us with procedural expertise and life experience recommendations which accentuated in our minds the importance of a holistic approach to crisis and trauma, particularly, the essential spiritual ingredient offered by the chaplaincy.

For the "down and dirty" "in your face" exposure to physical trauma, thanks to Cook County Hospital's Trauma and Burn Units staff: Drs Barrett, Hanumadass, Roberts, Fidles, Nagy, Kroshner, Joseph, Nasar, Slobodkin, Sloan, Matsuda, Mussat, Brennenman, Gittner; night nurses Barb, Jim, Margaret, Carol, Kelly, Lenny, Bill, Mauro, Abnir, Freddie, Mike, Victor, Katie, Laura, Saraf, Steve, Ms Kim, Mark, Philishia, Darlene, Lola, Rose, Anabelle, Celeste; physical and occupational therapists Jackie, Toya, Dana; as well as the unending rotation of medical students and residents.

For acceptance of our vision for this project and for patience as we struggled to gather and winnow information accordingly, we express thanks to Beth Burbank, Acting Director, Department of Clinical Pastoral Education,

Rush University, Chicago, IL, and our supervisor for the academic graduate certificate project. In the same manner, we appreciate recommendations and encouragement from the department's teaching staff as we went about piecing together this undertaking; particularly for JoAnn O'Reilly's keen aesthetic insights into 'packaging' this project. Thanks to the Spring '95 Quarter Clinical Pastoral Education interns for working through the spiritual assessment tool for crisis/trauma ministry and providing feedback regarding the tool's implementation. For Chicago Art Institute, Master of Arts, Art Therapy graduate Karen Lewis, we are grateful for being introduced to and having the opportunity to experience this unique rehabilitative discipline and free-hand self expression.

To Chaplain, Commander Donald W. Aven, Pastoral Care Services, Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, Va, many thanks for bringing us up to speed on the Navy's two rapid deployment crisis intervention teams; an operational concept we envision essential to optimal Air Force ministry during horrific times. For Chaplain, Colonel (sel) Robert D. Parlotz who offered first, a word of encouragement for the spiritual focus of this work; and, second, an intervention expertise he developed for trauma pastoral care with military in combat and critical incidents.

AFIT/CIS's willingness to dispatch us TDY for the World Congress on Stress, Trauma and Coping accentuates the Air Force's on-target commitment to personnel and the quintessential goal that the functional force remain functional even during and after catastrophic circumstances. And lastly, our humble thanks to the Office of the Chief of Chaplains for allowing us to abide in Chicago for a challenging and invigorating year of academic and spiritual pilgrimage.



James R. Dixon, Lt Col, USAF  
Catholic Chaplain



Karen H. Stocks, Maj, USAF  
Protestant Chaplain

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**  
**Biography**

**Chaplain, Lt Col, James R. Dixon**

Chaplain, Lt Col, James R. Dixon is assigned to the Air Force Institute of Technology, Rush University, and Cook County Hospital, Chicago, IL, specializing in Crisis and Trauma Ministry.

Chaplain Dixon was born April 21, 1942, in Detroit, Michigan. He professed his Solemn Vows as a member of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis in July, 1969, and was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood on May 16, 1970.

He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Languages from Saint Francis College of Pennsylvania; his Bachelor of Sacred Theology from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.; his Master of Divinity from Saint Francis Seminary, Loretto, Pennsylvania; his Master of Arts in Literature from Saint Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri; and is a graduate of the Institute for Educational Management, Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.

He taught English Literature at St. Francis College of Pennsylvania from 1970 to 1971, and then served as Executive Vice-President of the College from 1971 until 1976. He served as Superior of Franciscan University of Ohio, from 1976 through 1977; and then as Associate Pastor of St. Lawrence parish, Utica, Michigan, until June of 1979.

Chaplain Dixon was commissioned in the United States Air Force in July of 1979, and served at Malmstrom A.F.B., Montana, from July, 1979 until November, 1980; as Remote Station Chaplain in Alaska from December, 1980 through November, 1981; as Catholic Chaplain at Lackland A.F.B., Texas from December 1981 through June, 1984; as Catholic Chaplain at Clark Air Base, Republic of the Philippines, from July, 1984, through December, 1985; as Senior Catholic Chaplain, Mather A.F.B., California from June, 1986 through September, 1988; as Senior Catholic Chaplain at Upper Heyford, England, from October, 1988 to August, 1991; and as Chief of the Parish Division, Scott A.F.B., Illinois, from August, 1991 through July, 1994. During that time he was deployed to Cairo West, Egypt, where he served as Senior Chaplain. Chaplain Dixon began his present assignment in August, 1994.

His military awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, and the Air Force Commendation with two oak leaf clusters.

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**  
**Biography**

**CHAPLAIN, MAJOR, KAREN H. STOCKS**

Chaplain, Major, Karen H. Stocks is assigned to the Air Force Institute of Technology, Rush University, and Cook County Hospital, Chicago, IL, specializing in Crisis and Trauma Ministry.

Chaplain Stocks was born August 14, 1953, in Port Lavaca, TX. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Sociology in 1975 from Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX. In 1985, she received her Master of Divinity from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX. Chaplain Stocks is a 1992 graduate of the Air Command and Staff Course by seminar.

After receiving a commission from Officer's Training School in 1977, Chaplain Stocks served as Chief, Administration and Reports and as Operations Officer for the 436th Security Police Squadron, Charleston Air Force Base, SC, from December 1977 to August 1980. In August 1980, she was assigned to the 1100 Air Base Wing Security Police Squadron as Operations Officer.

Chaplain Stocks resigned her commission in December 1981 to attend Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. While in seminary, she was commissioned as an Air Force Chaplain Candidate and served at the Community Center Chapel, Air Force Academy, CO, and at Wilford Hall Medical Center, San Antonio, TX during the period February 1983 to August 1984.

Upon graduation from seminary in 1985, Chaplain Stocks served in the Air Force Reserves as Protestant Chaplain attached to England Air Force Base, LA.

In November 1987, she returned to active duty as an Air Force chaplain assigned to Dyess Air Force Base, TX, as Protestant Chaplain. During this assignment, she was deployed to two Desert Storm locations during the Gulf War and redeployment activities. She completed her assignment at Dyess in September 1991 and moved to the chapel as Protestant Chaplain at Lindsey Air Station, Germany, effective October 1991. From October 1992 until June 1994, she was assigned as Protestant Chaplain, 1100 Protestant Congregation primary pastor, Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Chaplain Stocks began her present position in August 1994.

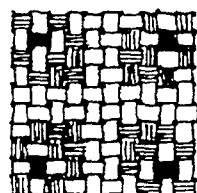
Her military awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, with one oak leaf cluster, the Air Force Commendation, with three oak leaf clusters, and the Southwest Asia Medal, with one device.

Chaplain Stocks is married to Col Samuel E. Stocks (USAF, Ret), former Deputy Chief of Staff of Security Police for the Military Airlift Command and United States Transportation Command.

**THE TAPESTRY  
OF  
TRAUMA & CRISIS**

**Pre Crisis/Trauma  
Ministry**

## ► TAPESTRY ◄



*I've looked at clouds from both sides now  
From give and take and still somehow  
It's life's illusions I recall  
I really don't know life, at all.*

Judy Collins  
"Both Sides Now"

**Life:** These lyrics easily might depict baffled expectations, voiced frustrations and inner whispers up and down the pendulum's arc of human existence regarding the meaning of life. What we know about this life so fearfully and wonderfully made is that it is complex, challenging and frequently in a state of flux. Seems that's the way it's been since the first family had to pack up and move out of the garden in Eden Paradise. No matter from which way we look at life, it is an intricately crafted pattern - a tapestry - of interwoven emotional, physical, behavioral, cultural, intellectual and spiritual strands forming the fabric of who we are and what gives shape to our world. Oftentimes, snatches from our strands will even become connected to and intertwined with the strands of others.

**Beyond Illusions:** But there is something else we know about life beyond the illusions. Trauma and critical incidents are becoming all to common features in modern life. The tapestry of life is being pulled, snagged, ripped and unraveled from violence, death, threat, loss, pain and uncertainty. What once was balanced becomes lopsided. What once was steady becomes wobbly. What once was grounded becomes fleeting. What once was peaceful becomes shattered. What once was the best of these fearfully and wonderfully made times becomes the worst of distressful and feared times.

## ► DEAR DIARY: DAY TWO, SAUDI ARABIA ◄

*The Security Police (SP) offer a tour of the base, the scud crater site, and the herds of camels beyond an impressive line of sand dunes. Just as the jostling ride in the humvee across desert sands comes to an end and we return to some sense of equilibrium on*

*the black top, a report is aired that a US military vehicle has been involved in a one vehicle accident on the main highway outside the base. Our patrol is the first US vehicle to arrive on scene.*

*Traffic is backed up for miles as drivers rubber-neck at the accident. The pavement is still damp from a freak two minute infrequent afternoon shower. Saudi military are directing traffic on both sides of the highway. A brand new Army deuce and a half truck with towing equipment is upside down on the opposite lanes of traffic than it had originally been travelling. The truck driver is pinned beneath the truck from his chest to his feet. Army medical response personnel are in route. An interpreter and Army convoy personnel explain what happened.*

*The local military had been waving the convoy through the area during the rain shower. The overturned truck driver, new to the theater, misunderstood the hand signals and thought he was being instructed to stop. He slammed on the brakes and the truck immediately began to spin out of control on the wet pavement and sand. In attempting to avoid hitting the traffic monitor in the middle of the highway, the truck driver turned the truck hard left. The truck flipped and rolled three times before coming to rest upside down on the driver across the median and in the oncoming lanes of traffic.*

*As we wait for the US ambulance, two Saudi ambulances drive up, look at the scene and then drive away. The local countrymen seem to be getting more agitated and excited. The interpreter does not reply to questions from the SPs inquiring what is going on. A third Saudi ambulance arrives before ours does. The Saudi ambulance driver and a Saudi military individual approach the pinned driver. The senior SP instructs the interpreter to inform the two persons that the US medical people will tend to the driver, to leave him where he is. As the words are being passed to the interpreter, the two Saudis quickly grip the soldier's arms and yank him from under the truck without having the truck lifted one bit.*

*The Army troop's arms seem to be pulled twice their normal length as if they are taffy being stretched. The soldier's body emerges violently from under the truck flat as a pancake. His body is as thin as a sheet of paper; his vital organs crushed. All US personnel are frozen in place in horror by the sight. Mouths gape open. Breaths are held for fear that any air flow will mean that this is not a dream, but real! And it is. He will be going home, now, in a box ....*

## ► LIVES INTERTWINED ◀

**No Boundaries:** Frozen in place, mouths gaping open, breaths silenced. Such are the lives of normal people, including military personnel, reacting normally to abnormal events of crisis and trauma. Crisis and trauma know no boundaries. Normal people suffer. Normal people mourn.

And with every new event outside the bounds of our usual experiences, the psalmist's gnashing of teeth is renewed in our own thoughts:

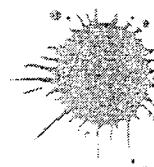
*My heart is in anguish within me,  
And the terrors of death have fallen upon me.  
Fear and trembling come upon me,  
And horror has overwhelmed me;*

- Psalm 55:4-5

**Intertwined:** Such are the lives of those connected to and intertwined with us pastorally, illusions and all. Many of us have participated in the partnership of crisis and trauma, travelling with wounded souls in their wilderness journeys of airshow disasters, shooting sprees, friendly fire casualties, war, aircraft mishaps, scud attacks, hostage situations, family violence, abandonment, suicide escalation, and a host of other horrors. Some have yet to be so blessed.

But, it will come. Crushed, perplexed, forsaken, fractured spirits will come into your life, tugging at the ultimate fringes of your strength and personal resources. You will feel the pulling, snagging, ripping and unraveling of your own perceived life tapestry as those who suffer death of hope, trust and community cling to the very fabric of your being.

Our past hands-on experiences of critical incidents during periods of calm and conflict did not immunize us from gnashing our teeth at the horrible sights and stories in Cook County Hospital's Trauma and Burn Units. Heads smashed to pulp like oranges from sport weapons of convenience - baseball bats. Teenagers, street veterans with bullet and knife wound tracks decorating their bodies, ambivalent to the possibility of death visiting them. Mangled bodies self propelled from highrise apartment building windows to escape assault in their own home. Dangling and fried flesh criss-crossing the spectrum of age, gender and race and set aflame by intentional abuse, by careless behavior, by suicide gestures, and by demonstrations of gang member toughness and resourcefulness.



Crisis and trauma ministry will take every ounce you have to muster, pastorally, to shepherd a traumatized flock through other than green pastures or quiet waters. To take up the shepherd's crook means taking up step in step with the blood and sweat and tears of the broken in spirit.

What follows are assessment tools and intervention strategies in

preparation for broken spirit days when the sharp rap of crisis and trauma comes knocking at your door. It can come anytime, anywhere, through anyone. Just as it came one night to a soldier alone in his foxhole; alone with his God ....

## ► GOD IN A FOXHOLE ◄

*Lord God, I have never spoken to you.*

*But now I want to say: "How do you do?"*

*You see, God, they told me you didn't exist - - -*

*And like a fool I believed all this.*

*Last night from a shellhole I saw your sky,*

*And figured right then they told me a lie.*

*Had I taken time to see things you made,*

*I'd know they weren't calling a spade, a spade.*

*I wonder God, If you'd shake my hand.*

*Somehow I feel that you'd understand.*

*Funny I had to come to this hellish place,*

*Before I had time to see your face.*

*Well I guess the zero hour will soon be here,*

*But, I'm not afraid since I know you're here.*

*The signal! Well, God, I'll have to go - - -*

*I like you lots, this I want you to know.*

*Look now! This will be a terrible fight;*

*Who knows, I may come to your house tonight!*

*Tho' I wasn't friendly with you before,*

*I wonder God, if you'd wait at your door?*

*Look, I'm crying - - - me, shedding tears!*

*I wish I'd known you these many years.*

*Well, God, I have to go now - - - Goodbye - - -*

*Strange, since I met you, I'm not afraid to die.*

[Written by an unknown Army Reservist while he was waiting in a foxhole the night before the ground war began in Desert Storm; and, tearfully shared with the Sunday evening Protestant service held at "The Oasis" (chapel tent), Eskane Village, Saudi Arabia, 1991]

Prepare for the sharp rap of crisis and trauma knocking at the door.  
Prepare, for, come it will.

## ► SPIRITUAL PATTERNS ◀

*Plan ahead.  
It wasn't raining  
when Noah built the ark.*

- Anonymous 'keen observer of life'

**Plan.** Prepare. When the storm of crisis hits, be ready with a boat and paddle before heading up life's Crisis Creek. Before any crisis occurs, determine what you are about in ministry and how you shall pattern your ministry under a myriad of unimaginable horrific traumatic situations. Prepare to manage crisis or else crisis will manage you!

**Plan Ahead:** Train as a staff in managing crisis. Understand who your community is and the dynamics of that community. In other words, know your flock before facing a raging creek. Know what resources exist, what gaps in resources exist, and what resources are appropriate for given situations. Analyze the community's trauma history and what assessments and intervention methods currently are ready for implementation.

† Recommendation: Build a Crisis/Trauma Interdisciplinary Team. Establish a working group of chaplains, doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, fire fighters, security police and family support personnel (as a minimum). Plan, enact, and evaluate crisis response operations designed to return victims to some sense of normalcy as quickly as possible. This team goes beyond initial technical response at a disaster scene; it deals head-on with individuals, units and bases affected by traumatic events. Our experience at Cook County Hospital confirms for us that when chaplains are not part of a specifically designed working network of crisis/trauma response professionals, then crisis/trauma ministry will be overlooked as a possible course of action. Crisis/Trauma ministry relegated to the back burner leaves victims up the creek without a spiritual paddle to make sense out of the incident, their life, and their faith.

Educate the community. Let the community know who you are and what you have to offer during crises and trauma situations. In other words, let the flock know the shepherd who will be splashing around with them in the creek. Engage the community in working with you on resolutions which quickly lead to a return to normalcy in the face of critical and traumatic

abnormal phenomenon.

**Plan Now:** Be ready for the day when you come face to face with the flood of another's anguish and words such as: "I'm scared, I think he will kill me."

## ►PIECES OF SCRAPS: SANDRA'S STORY◀

*Sandra\*, what is left of her life scraps, slithers into the office, shaking, ashen, wild-eyed, digging into the fabric covered dry wall with her fingernails. After taking a seat in the office, Sandra remains agitated, wrings her hands, entangles her fingers, darts her eyes around the room. At the knock on the door she bolts from the chair and takes refuge huddling, violently shivering, in the corner of the room and bracing herself between two bookcases. Wrapping an arm around her shoulders, leading her back to the chair, sitting opposite her while holding her hands, the chaplain calms Sandra enough that she can recite her marriage saga.*

*Sandra has been married only a few months to her base weight-lifting champion husband. During their three month courtship, Ted makes her feel special, pays attention to her, praises her for her work. But after the wedding, the beatings and threats begin. The accusations of 'fooling around' flow freely from Ted's mouth. Sandra is expected to be available for Ted to keep his eye on her any time of the day, any where. Lately, he has been stalking her at work, calling her every thirty minutes to check and see if she is in her office.*

*Ted has now uttered a directive that Sandra not leave her office throughout the day until quitting time. However, her military position is one that requires her to coordinate and escort individuals around the base. Two days prior to this session, Sandra tells Ted that she is leaving him. He beats her. He threatens to kill her. She now is living in her office. She is afraid of this man she describes as "solid muscle" who is built "like a box."*

*Sandra begins to sob in loud gasping breaths. With a tone that declares the chaplain is her last hope of hopes she pleads: "I can't live like this. The marriage is over. I just want to survive. I want to pick up the pieces and go on. What should I do?"*

\* Names of individuals and locations have been changed throughout the project

## • SNAGGED FABRIC: A CHAPLAIN'S STORY •

In many ways, my new temporary foreign home is just like any other Air Force Base. It comes complete with dining hall, chapel, hospital, administrative offices, operations center, civil engineering shop, flight line, base exchange, gym and movie theater. There is one major difference, however. My new base is a tent city. I try to imagine the work that went into constructing it. I soon feel the pride of those first occupants who built it on the desert sand just weeks before I arrived.

After inprocessing and changing into civilian clothes, I hop on the shuttle for the half hour ride off base to where I will be staying. I have expected to stay in a tent on base and come prepared with sleeping bag, mosquito netting, bug spray, canteen and all the other paraphernalia the military views as absolute necessity



for "roughing it." I can hardly contain my delight as two local national hotel bellboys carry my bags to a lavish suite of rooms with a panoramic view. One of the bellboys turns down my bed, puts chocolates on the pillows and closes the curtains while the other begins unpacking my gear.

I sleep for several hours and then take a long, hot, and much needed shower. In sport shirt and slacks, the attire required by the hotel management, I make my way to one of the hotel's four dining rooms. Nourished, I catch the shuttle for the ride back to base.

It doesn't take me long to settle into a comfortable routine. During the morning hours I visit the various work places and speak with the airmen about their work. As planes arrive from a forward operating location carrying the wounded, I accompany the medical staff to meet them. At noon the chapel manager and I stroll over to

the dining hall tent for a light lunch. It is a lively place with airmen laughing and telling the stories of the day and tales of the previous night's excursions into the market places. It always seems as though everyone is talking and nobody is listening - there is so much to tell. In the afternoons we make our way back to the hotel for an hour or so of sunning at the pool. After showering we hail our faithful cabbie and drive to the most interesting places and to the best shopping areas of the city. Back at the hotel we meet for dinner in the Italian restaurant usually, but occasionally in the seafood or Asian restaurants for a change of pace.

I hope the whole experience will last for months on end. And then one day, when the troops begin to withdraw from the forward operating location, something happens which makes me see the entire experience in a whole new light.

It is noon and the dining hall tent is filled with noisy airmen recounting their experiences of the night before. Into the tent, single file, walks 60 Marines in full battle dress, rifles over their shoulders, pistols strapped to their waists, unshaven, dirty, and deadly silent. Each one has a far away and blank stare on his face. Seeing them I know immediately they have a story that we can not begin to imagine. Yet, they seem to be unable to do the one thing that will help them most - tell their story - talk, period.

As the days pass, more and more Marines come through the base. They all make a trip through the dining hall tent and they all display the same symptom of silence. Their experience at the forward operating location is certainly different from what we have been experiencing.

But the story comes, gradually, piece by piece, one by one. Armed conflict. Marines killed. Marines wounded. Marines shocked. Penned down by assailants who yesterday had been the very people they had fed and protected on this humanitarian mission.

Having the Marines come through changes us, changes the whole base. It is no longer the care-free place I once experienced. We no longer want the experience to last forever. We pray for the end of our tour to come quickly. And when the day comes for one of us to rotate, we board the plane for home expressing our hope that those who remain shall soon follow.

## ► DESIGNS: MODELS OF SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT ◀

**Making sense:** Assessment in traumatic events, such as Sandra's and the Marines' stories, will be a handful for anyone attempting to make some meaningful sense out of situations that go beyond the ordinary. Crisis guarantees that sudden and dramatic changes will occur. Appraising the impact of critical incidents will prove to be a 'here and now' continuous

process as victims' reactions and emotions balloon and wither in sync with the "out of normal step" rhythm crises promise.

**Models:** A variety of spiritual assessment models exist. Abbreviated illustrations of three models we worked with while at Rush University and Cook County Hospital are found in Appendix A and listed below. The fourth model illustrated is one we developed for rapid, on the spot, assessment.

### ■ 7x7 Model of Spiritual Assessment

- George Fitchett's model offers a thorough process that accommodates persons of any religious background. The 7x7 model does require sufficient commitment of time to work through all the elements in order to reap the greatest benefits.

### ■ Triage Assessment Form for Crisis Intervention

- Myer, Williams, Ottens and Schmidt's assessment form is designed to facilitate a rapid assessment procedure. However, executing this model requires a prior thorough introduction to the logic and a honed working knowledge of the detailed graded scale variations and scoring formulas.

### ■ Story Theology Assessment.

- Beth Burbank's story theology process develops a pastoral care plan which gives "voice to the theology of experience" based on people's feelings and images revealed through their stories. To be faithful to a particular person's "living human document" - story - the model presupposes the chaplain personally hears and observes the telling of a particular individual's story.

### ■ Spiritual Assessment Tool for Crisis/Trauma Ministry

‡ Recommendation: Chs Jim Dixon and Karen Stocks suggest an agile, accurate assessment model that need not be form-bound, single client-bound, or time constraint-bound. The assessment model tool is illustrated on the next page. This process can be rapidly engaged in crises and trauma - in those cases when multiple sessions in comfortable offices are out of the question:

## Spiritual Assessment Tool for Crisis/Trauma Ministry

<b>CRISIS/TRAUMA EVENT:</b> _____		
<b>PASTORAL CARE SERVICES</b>	<b>VICTIM/COMMUNITY REACTIONS</b>	<b>COMMUNITY RESOURCES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Counseling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ethical/Moral</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Presence of Ministry</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> On Scene</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/Home</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unit/Office</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demobilization/Defusing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rites</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prayer</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sacraments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Anger/Violence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coping Skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Denial</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fear/Threat</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grief/Loss</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Guilt</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low Self Esteem</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manipulation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mobility/Immobility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self Pity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Suffering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Church/Chapel</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clergy/Chaplain</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medical</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friends</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unit/Squadron</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social Services Programs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> No Support</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li> </ul>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS:</b> _____ _____ _____		
<b>CHAPLAIN INTERVENTION:</b> _____ _____ _____		
<b>EVALUATION OF ASSESSMENT EFFECTIVENESS:</b> _____ _____ _____		
<b>ADDITIONAL REFERRAL:</b> _____ _____ _____		
<b>SPECIAL CONCERN:</b> _____ _____ _____		

## ► PIECING TOGETHER: USING THE SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR CRISIS/TRAUMA MINISTRY ◀

**Piecing Together:** A reliable, easy to use, rapid assessment tool instills confidence to launch into the swells and troughs of another's life seas. We are prepared and primed to serve as a life raft for those waterlogged from the tidal waves of sudden and horrifying events. We are spiritual buoys of reassurance that the same God who made a path through one sea will make a way through the current crashing billows of trauma before we find ourselves pulled down by an undertow of the critical moment.

### Pieces:

<b>Crisis/Trauma Event:</b> What is happening/has happened/to whom? What is the story behind this crisis/trauma event? What is the perceived transgression, threat, loss?
<b>Pastoral Care Services:</b> What counseling or religious rites are you prepared to provide? Where is crisis management taking place and how do the variables of location and time affect what pastoral care services will be administered? The next chapter discusses demobilization and defusing.
<b>Victim/Community Reactions:</b> What feelings are being expressed and what behaviors are being acted out?
<b>Community Resources:</b> What helping agency resources are available and appropriate for this crisis/trauma event?
<b>Assessment of Needs:</b> Identify the needs of all victims. Victims are not limited to those directly impacted by the crisis/trauma event. Vicarious traumatization happens to people who surround and come into contact with the tensions and emotions experienced by the direct victims. Rescue workers, medical personnel, family, school, units, friends, and chaplains represent those who might be traumatized vicariously; and, therefore have special personal needs associated with the situation.
<b>Chaplain Intervention:</b> Response strategy based on a six-step model of intervention recognized and used across the country and a paradigm for chaplain response. The six-step model is detailed in the next major section.
<b>Evaluation of Assessment Effectiveness:</b> An on-going review of the assessment and crisis/trauma impact. Analysis of crisis management alternatives; critique on victims and response personnel's ability to follow through with intervention strategies.
<b>Additional Referral:</b> What referral(s) might be feasible at a later date or regarding secondary issues that have surfaced in light of this crisis?
<b>Special Concerns:</b> Any unanswered questions, gut feelings, etc, important to note?

**Spiritual Piecemeal:** When the currents of crisis are raging for the Sandra's of the world, what should we do? When the tides of trauma beat against the Marines' mind-set for protective arks of hope, trust, and community, what can we do? What ministerial responses give buoyancy to the meaning of life and faith during horrific times?

We attempt to weave a continuous thread of God's love through lives twisted from horrendous problems. We reach out and touch mangled souls battered and beaten from crisis and trauma. We strive to make a difference in hearts strained and gnarled by terrifying events. We keep afloat those created, divinely pieced together, as the image of God amidst victimizing incidents.

Crisis means change. The Chinese translation of crisis is both danger and opportunity. Crisis for one may mean an unwanted horrible experience. The same crisis for another may mean a welcomed opportunity. Therefore, the assessment tool does not try to define what does or does not constitute a crisis/trauma event.

This assessment model honors what "crisis" means in the same manner that the meaning "confidentiality" is honored. Just as the right of confidentiality belongs to the individual seeking help, what is or is not defined as a crisis situation, critical incident, or traumatic event belongs to that same individual. Thus, crisis/trauma ministry starts where the individual, unit, base, or community is in any given situation.

## ► PATCHWORK: INTERVENTION STRATEGY IN THE THROES OF DILEMMA .

*I shall pass thru this world but once.  
Any good, therefore, that I can do  
Or any kindness that I can show to any human being,  
Let me do it now.  
Let me not defer from it,  
nor neglect it, for  
I shall not pass this way again*

- Author unknown

**Lean on Us:** If your life is torn, ripped, and stretched from crises and trauma, why not lean upon the strength of God embodied in the

ordained? Why not trust in the word that there is a light at the end of the tunnel of horror from one who walks in the Light? Why not rest gut wrenching tales of anguish in the hands of those who incarnate the on-going creating, building up work of the Spirit? Why not seek mercy and kindness in a concrete way from a present day pillar of spiritual rock and refuge?

*Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you;  
he will never let the righteous fall.*

- Psalm 55:22

And so they lean on the concrete presence of the Holy; they lean on us for comfort and the best intervention we have to keep them from falling.

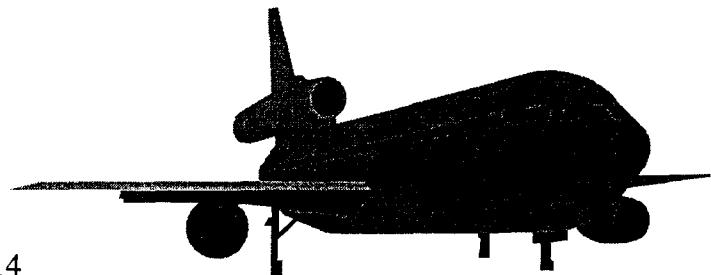
**In A Flash:** Victims of crisis and traumatic incidents want help fast to get better in the twinkling of an eye. They want to restore their basic levels for being, functioning, and believing as swiftly as possible. In a flash would be none too soon.

*In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet,  
we will be changed.*

- 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, adapted

Intervention during crises and trauma is a fluid and complicated process. Steering around sudden sharp curves, navigating over instantaneous pitfalls, dodging rapid hazardous fallout, hiking through fleeting fog of the unknown means that intervention is never a rigid process. Two 1994 Fall commercial aircraft crashes illustrate how quickly the changing current of reactions associated with traumatic events can distract initially deployed intervention efforts.

**US Air:** The crash of a US Air flight outside of Pittsburgh soon is followed by an American Airlines ATR flight bound for Chicago O'Hare Airport which crashes in Indiana. Rescue teams respond immediately to both crises. The difficult tasks of identifying passengers and notifying family proceed in a normal and similar fashion at both airlines. Then American Airlines intervenes on behalf of the families and transports them out to view the crash site. US Air does not and is criticized for



their insensitivity to the grief and loss of surviving family members. From that point on, US Air's intervention strategy is an uphill battle with families, media, and the general public.

**American Airlines:** While initially enjoying the kudos of the nation for the way American Airlines handled families, their efforts soon fall from grace. Family members bussed to the scene voice their horror at the sight of body parts littered around the impact crater. All of the body parts were supposed to have been retrieved. Now families wonder whether or not their loved one really has been found and tagged at the make-shift morgue or left to decompose in an Indiana field. From that point on, American Airlines' intervention strategy become an uphill battle with families, media, and the general public. Change can be counted on as a constant factor in crisis intervention. Intervention strategies constantly are having to adapt to those changes.

**Six-Step Model:** A systematic, yet resilient, action response method well suited for chaplains' crisis case management is the "Six-Step Model of Crisis Intervention" developed by Burl E. Gilliland and Richard K. James of Memphis State University (p. 28-32, Gilliland and James, 1993). The model is used across the country:

- ✓ **Defining the Problem**  
Comprehend what is happening from the victim(s) story; name the dilemma, crisis, trauma.
- ✓ **Ensuring Client Safety**  
Identify what physical and psychological dangers exist for victims and others; minimize the threat and provide continuous safety.
- ✓ **Providing Support**  
Communicate value of victims; accept victims unconditionally and positively; demonstrate care for victims.
- ✓ **Examining Alternatives**  
Amass a variety of available resources and coping mechanisms; scrutinize appropriate options for the crisis.
- ✓ **Making Plans**  
Plan course of action to restore victims' being, functioning and believing equilibrium; differentiate which collaborated action steps will be the responsibility of chaplain and which will be those for the victim(s).

✓ **Obtaining Commitment**

Fulfill intervention responsibilities by carrying out chaplain's part of action plan; obtain commitment from victim(s) to proceed with their portion of the realistic course of action.

## ► SCRAPS AND SNAGS REVISITED ◀

**Assessment is Intervention:** Intervention begins the moment assessment begins. These synchronous and mingled rubrics for doing crisis/trauma ministry tear into the heart fabric of transgression, threat, and loss. The journey of restoration begins to bring some meaningful spiritual equilibrium sense out of life once more.

*My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression,  
you who have received the Spirit  
should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.*

- Galatians 6:1

**Beginning the Restoration:** The interplay between assessment and intervention is illustrated with two stories of transgression, threat, and loss mentioned earlier: Sandra's story and the chaplain's story about 60 Marines.

### Sandra's Scraps & A Chaplain's Snags:

<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>INTERVEN-TION</b>
<b>CRISIS/TRAUMA EVENT</b>	<b>DEFINING THE PROBLEM</b>
<b>PASTORAL CARE SERVICES</b>	<b>DEFINING THE PROBLEM &amp; PROVIDING SUPPORT</b>

Instead of a respected partner in the marriage, Sandra is relegated to a position as Ted's domestic bunching bag. Ted's threats and capability to inflict insufferable brutality makes real for Sandra a horrendous situation of impending serious physical injury and the possibility of death.

Sandra's crisis, while not new, is escalating rapidly. She does not need to schedule a counseling appointment; she needs pastoral care, now, while in the office. Spiritual, family, and ethical counsel are warranted. The sacredness of Sandra's existence is being attacked. Sandra and Ted are young, married soon after meeting without informing either family about the wedding beforehand, without benefit of marriage counseling, and without reflection on cultural

**COMMUNITY  
RESPONSE**

differences. Problems at home have spilled over into her military job and tainted her supervisors' confidence regarding her professionalism.

Sandra is a victim of spousal abuse. Fear emanates from Sandra's every pore. She knows first hand about her husband's capabilities with his fists. She does not want those fists to be the last thing she knows here on earth. She is anxious, fidgeting constantly, alert to all sounds outside the office door, expecting her husband's unannounced arrival any moment. Low self esteem is evident in her keeping the wedding secret from family, in lacking respect for herself to remain silent about the beatings and threats. Physical and emotional suffering gushes throughout her story. Yet, her story has remained withdrawn within her until now; and now, she is withdrawn from the marriage. While weak, Sandra's coping skills are not hopeless. Her situation has not made her entirely immobile. She takes a giant step by coming to the chaplain. Coping skills active in a successful military career need confidence bolstering in the marital arena. Ted is a victim of his anger, a violent nature, as well as inappropriate and manipulating coping skills

**COMMUNITY  
RESOURCES**

Chaplain support already is in operation. Sandra has her unit's blessing to take time from work as necessary. Social services agencies exist in the community for battered women. Legal assistance is also available in the community if she decides to act on the assertion that "the marriage is over." Medical support, if needed, is on base. Questionable is how supportive family and friends can be at this point. They are currently unaware of the situation. Ted's violent expressions can be addressed by a number of resources: another chaplain, his unit, anger management classes in the community or on base.

**ASSESSMENT  
OF NEEDS**

Currently the meaning of life for Sandra is that the sacredness of Sandra's existence is in danger; life is not a healthy prospect at the moment. No dignity is extended to her by Ted. Home and marriage is an unsafe environment rather than a place where no one should be a stranger. Sandra needs to recover control over her life, to make a decision about her marriage, and to alleviate abuse in her life.

**CHAPLAIN  
INTERVEN-  
TION**

The chaplain's office provides a safe place for Sandra. Empathic posturing by the chaplain not only demonstrates concern and care for Sandra, but it also shows a genuine conviction of the importance and value due another human being. In an effort to secure Sandra's continuing safety, the available community resource options are discussed. Sandra assists in choosing appropriate resources to meet her needs. A

**ENSURING  
CLIENT  
SAFETY  
&  
PROVIDING  
SUPPORT**

**EXAMINING  
ALTERNA-  
TIVES  
&  
PROVIDING  
SUPPORT**

**DEFINING  
THE  
PROBLEM  
&  
EXAMINING  
ALTERNA-  
TIVES**

**ENSURING  
CLIENT  
SAFETY  
&  
EXAMINE  
ALTERNA-  
TIVES  
&  
MAKING  
PLANS**

	<p>course of action is created identifying steps to be accomplished by the chaplain and those Sandra will implement. The chaplain contacts both Sandra and Ted's unit commanders and informs them that the couple's marital difficulties are being addressed, instructs Sandra how to contact the chaplain any time of the day in an emergency, schedules a series of counseling appointments with Sandra to help her understand her significance as one created in the image of God, and gets a commitment from another chaplain to offer counseling to Ted if Ted will accept.</p>	<b>OBTAINING COMMITMENT &amp; PROVIDING SUPPORT &amp; EXAMINING ALTERNATIVES</b>
<b>EVALUATION OF ASSESSMENT EFFECTIVENESS</b>	The chaplain is convinced that Sandra is capable of carrying out the discussed plan of action. Sandra agrees to follow through with her portion of the plan: seek counseling at the battered women's shelter, see a lawyer about divorce procedures, establish her own bank account, move back into the unit dormitory, keep her supervisors informed of her progress, notify her family, tell her friends, not be in close proximity of Ted by herself, contact the police if she is threatened by Ted. Periodic updates with the chaplain are scheduled for Sandra to share plan accomplishments and for both to rethink plan glitches.	<b>PROVIDING SUPPORT</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL REFERRAL</b>	Additional referrals may not be necessary unless the situation changes and Sandra is unable to implement her plan of action.	<b>PROVIDING SUPPORT</b>
<b>SPECIAL CONCERN</b>	One special concern is improved communication with her family in the near future.	<b>PROVIDING SUPPORT</b>
<b>CRISIS/TRAUMA EVENT</b>	 <i>The Marines have lost their voice, silenced by the sights, sounds, and smell of battle. Their sense of community and security is shattered with each dead and wounded comrade. Their trust is eroded from betrayal by those they fed and protected. Their glazed stares and thundering silence are proof enough that their humanitarian mission was a horrendous experience, unspeakably grievous.</i>	<b>DEFINING THE PROBLEM</b>
<b>PASTORAL CARE SERVICES</b>	<i>The traumatic situation is not long past. What remains are those who have made it out alive and uninjured physically. Spiritual counsel to offer hope</i>	<b>PROVIDING SUPPORT</b>

*in the face of hopeless stares is appropriate. Defusings (defined in the next chapter) will fill the empty space between deployed experience and return home; and, will begin the restoration to normalcy.*

**COMMUNITY  
RESPONSES**

*Every Marine has confronted the violence, threats, and betrayal from a people they provide with security and nourishment. Lost to the bloodshed are buddies, military soul mates. Perhaps there is guilt associated with making it out unscathed. Perhaps there is denial that it really happened; after all, look at the calmness and jovial atmosphere in the dining hall tent. Their feelings have been immobilized. Keeping their own counsel, withdrawing from those around them, helps them keep on keeping on.*

**ENSURING  
CLIENT  
SAFETY**

**COMMUNITY  
RESOURCES**

*In their transient mode and location, resources for the Marines are limited by setting and time. Still, they have each other for security and their command cadre for support. They have empathetic chapel staff to hear whatever form of voice may sound. They have the medical staff for one on one sessions. The Marines are not the only victims. The airmen at the base are impacted by the Marines' behavior.*

**EXAMINING  
ALTERNA-  
TIVES  
&  
PROVIDING  
SUPPORT**

**ASSESSMENT  
OF NEEDS**

*The Marines need help. They need to tell their story. They need to open up. Yet, they seem to be unable to do the one thing that will help them most, and that is to talk. The chaplain is determined to find out what that story is and help them make some sense out of an otherwise senseless experience. Help for the airmen can be addressed after the Marines redeploy to the states.*

**DEFINING  
THE  
PROBLEM  
&  
ENSURING  
CLIENT  
SAFETY**

**CHAPLAIN  
INTERVEN-  
TION**

*The chaplain attempts to provide an atmosphere of acceptance whereby the Marines may tell their story, unedited. Individuals are approached one by one at the dining hall tables, then small groups. Not all are willing to talk, but enough recount the tale out loud that the collective voice slowly begins to recover from spiritual and emotional laryngitis. The command cadre of the group is encouraged to provide follow-up support upon their return to station.*

**MAKING  
PLANS  
&  
EXAMINING  
ALTERNA-  
TIVES  
&  
ENSURING  
CLIENT  
SAFETY**

**EVALUATION  
OF  
ASSESSMENT  
EFFECTIVE-  
NESS**

*The Marines do not "buy into" a course of action. The chaplain does not pursue their acceptance of a particular plan, satisfied that they begin to find their voices, hope, trust and community in spite of their exceptionally abnormal value changing traumatic event.*

**OBTAINING  
COMMITMENT**

**ADDITIONAL  
REFERRAL**

*The Marines stay on the base only a day or two before redeploying home. Follow-up needs to occur at their home base.*

**ENSURE  
CLIENT  
SAFETY**

## ► ORDER OUT OF CHAOS: GOALS OF CRISIS/TRAUMA MINISTRY◀

*When God began creating the heavens and the earth,  
the earth was at first a shapeless, chaotic mass,  
with the Spirit of God brooding over the dark vapors.*

- Genesis 1:1-2

**Good Chaos:** God starts with nothing but chaos and creates what is "good". Is it any wonder that people desiring to work out the spiritual "good" meaning for their lives wait until chaos is "good" and set-in before inviting us to bring order out of their shapeless and chaotic mass? Chaos describes the condition we naturally come to regard as life around us. Change and static. Order and disorder. Brightness and darkness. Successes and failures. Safety and danger. Peace and conflict. Breath and death. Holy and unholy.

**Blessed Be:** No matter what grandiose images people place on us and our office, we cannot take away hurt and make everything exactly the same as it was once upon a time. What we can do is be there with them, help them and care for them. We are not the folk who take away the grief of the world; we are simple folk who take up the challenge to make a difference in the lives of others facing grief, loss, transgression, change. We don't always have the right answers. We can do only the best that we can do - even if all we can do is "croak" scripture and say "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

**Goals:** All of our pastoral responses, all of our efforts at intervention, all of our assessment measures give definition to the pattern of goals which are central to crisis/trauma ministry. Continually questioning 'what are the goals of crisis/trauma ministry' helps in charting and navigating a promising course through the wake of life's billows.

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## GOALS

1. PROMOTE SPIRITUAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF VICTIM AND SURVIVOR.
  2. MITIGATE CRITICAL INCIDENT IMPACT ON LIFE FUNCTION.
  3. EMPOWER THROUGH ACCEPTANCE/USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES.
  4. IMPLEMENT CRISIS MANAGEMENT INTERVENTION STRATEGIES.
  5. ASSIST IN THE RETURN TO EFFECTIVE COPING SKILLS.
  6. EDUCATE AND CELEBRATE; COUNSEL AND CONSOLE.
  7. AVOID LOSS OF HOPE, TRUST, AND COMMUNITY.
- 
- 

### **Revive Us Again:**

*Then a voice shall be heard:  
Build up a highway, build it and clear the track,  
sweep away all that blocks my people's path.*

*Thus speaks the high and exalted one,  
whose name is holy, who lives forever:  
I dwell in a high and holy place  
with the broken and humble in spirit,  
to revive the spirit of the humble,  
to revive the courage of the broken.*

- Isaiah 57:14, 15

### **Spiritual Proverb:**

*When a victim voices:*

*Refurbish my life, restore it and lift the fog of crisis,  
purge all that traumatizes me from knowing hope, trust, and community.*

*Then affirms one of the cloth,  
an advocate struggling to bring order into chaos  
and closeness instead of separation:*

*I venture into life's twisted and rended strands of crisis and trauma  
with the forsaken and fractured in spirit,  
to inflame the spirit of the perplexed,  
to quicken the courage of the crushed.*

**Spiritual Damage Control:** These goals of crisis/trauma ministry are purposeful, intentional, ambitious means to care for the pulled, snagged, ripped and unraveled lives. They are more than just ruffles and frills. They are the topstitching - the sutures - which once more plait into pattern the elements of faith, hope, assurance and comfort for crisis/trauma victims. They provide "spiritual damage control"; what once was lopsided now becomes balanced, what once was wobbly now becomes steady, what once was fleeting now becomes grounded, and what once was shattered now becomes peaceful.

*Cease to dwell on days gone by  
and to brood over past history.*

*Here and now I will do a new thing;  
this moment it will break from the bud.*

*Can you not perceive it?*

*I will make a way even through the wilderness  
and paths in barren desert;  
for I will provide water in the wilderness  
and rivers in the barren desert,  
where my chosen people may drink.*

- Isaiah 43:18,19,20

## **► THE AFTERMATH ◀**

Have our pastoral responses, intervention efforts and assessment measures helped bring good out the chaos? Has a rainbow appeared after the crisis's storm and trauma's thunder? Have the chaplains provided for Sandra's and the Marines' return to normalcy?

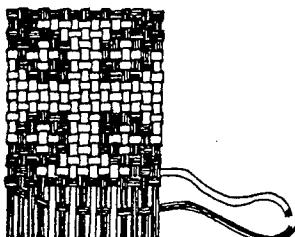
**Sandra:** While the trauma of beatings and the crisis of constant mental anguish barrage her self esteem and value, the chaplain's safety and acceptance rekindles Sandra's spiritual health and well-being. Acknowledging respect for her divinely created self, she casts aside her marital image - that of a standard gym punching bag. She begins to function normally in accepting responsibility for her actions, and hers alone. She gives back to Ted the responsibility of his abusive and manipulative behavior. Realizing that she is not alone in her struggle, Sandra determines what available resources will most benefit her now and help her put the pieces of her life back together. Sandra decides what she will do and what she will do first - move out. She is energized to choreograph each step of her plan and copes with a crisis resolution. She learns changing the situation means changing herself. She discovers reason to celebrate and advances from a life-raft clinger to an independent swimmer. Animated with hope, she receives counsel regarding her sacredness, dignity, status change, and restoration of faith and trust. She is consoled for the necessary but forthcoming loss of a partner, lover, and once upon a time friend. Once on the edge of hopelessness and on the edge of ceasing to live, she reassures her faith in a sea path-making God to help her through the crashing waves and threatening undertow of her life experience. It is a new beginning for one broken and fractured spirit.

**Marines:** In the lethal forward operating environment, the Marines assume a survival mode. Naked aggression directed at them causes the repression of emotions, values and morals. Now, this becomes their "normal" behavior. Their spiritual well-being is put on hold while they try to escape the crisis with their physical well-being intact. Reaching the safety of the air base, their behavior does not change. Still repressed are feelings, or fear, disgust, grief, horror; and something else is repressed - their voice. One by one and then small group by small group, they are accepted and joined in sharing a meal with the chaplain. One by one and then small group by small group, Marines begin to find their voice and share pieces of an appalling story. They must redeploy to the states before more intervention outside of active listening occurs; before coping skills outside of talking are up and running again; before there is education or celebration. But they do not redeploy empty handed. The chaplain has been their listening resource, counselor and consoler. And they leave with more hope than when they arrived. It is a new beginning for many broken and fractured spirits.

**Chaplains:** And with a sigh of exhaustion and relief, there is still grit enough to "croak" a little scripture: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." A very present help in the face of crisis and trauma ministry.

**THE THREADS  
OF  
TRAUMA & CRISIS:  
Crisis/Trauma  
Ministry**

## ► THREADS ◀



*Going down to Stoney End,  
I never wanted to go.  
I never wanted to go.*

- Barbra Streisand  
"Stoney End"

**LIFE SHELLINGS:** Car jackings bombard our freedom. Muggings rake our security. Drive-by shootings zero in

on our relationships. Abuse takes aim at our dignity. Murder opens up on our dreams. Suicide blasts away at our confidence. Air crashes mortar our potential. Gas attacks pepper our trust. Conflict commences firing on our peace. These are not just inner city life shellings. Nor are they all-out-war life shellings. They are shellings which strike lives that come from the north, south, east and west. They are shellings which target old and young, male and female, different cultures and ethnic backgrounds, interfaith and persons of no faith, civilian and military.

We know this all too well. We have come to accept the shellings as life's status quo. So we expect shelled lives to buckle down and pick themselves up by their bootstraps and march forward with countless others who have gone on before.

*If we're going to accept the sunshine and warmth,  
then we must also accept the thunder and lightning.  
Even King David did not live on a perpetual high.  
Take a peek at the Psalms.*

- From an anonymous 'keen observer of life'

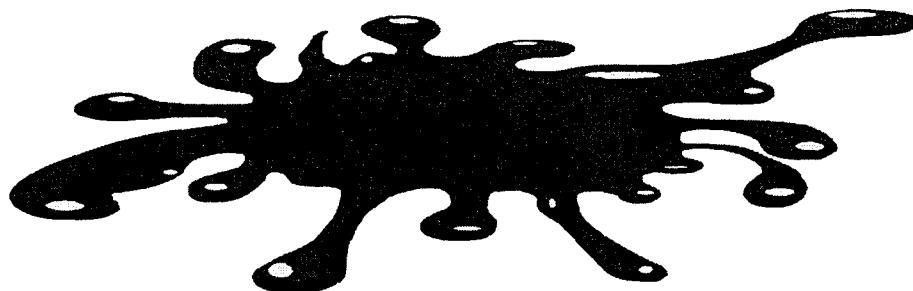
**Sights, Sounds, Feelings:** But life's shellings are not to have the last word. That is why the discipline of crisis and trauma management has become a vital and innovative field of investigation; why counselors and therapists are rushing to create new theories and formal therapeutic approaches for victims and survivors of critical incident stress and post-traumatic stress; why the military services are investing in crisis and trauma ministry education. Life guarantees shelled sights of "going down to stoney end[s]," shelled sounds of 'I never wanted to go,' and shelled feelings of "various kinds of emotional 'blood'" (p. 25, Switzer, 1989).

## ► A FIELD OF EMOTIONAL BLOOD ◄

While on post check, the Security Police Lieutenant (Lt) pauses to watch the prop jet trainer take off from the aero club. Five minutes later the report comes over the security net that an aircraft has crashed about ten miles from base. Grabbing a couple of security flight personnel, the Lt heads out to secure the scene. The accident is in a corn field. The field is unplowed and dotted with last year's corn stubble. It appears that the entire field is covered with little pieces of plane in and on top of the well formed furrows.

A farmer approaches and says: "I thought he was going to make it. He cleared the tops of the trees on that one side of the road and went under the power lines on the other side. I didn't hear any engine. It was quiet." A small plane coming over the tops of the trees at a steep angle and dipping under the power lines should have ample clearance to make an emergency landing in the field, unless.... The "unless" lies directly under the power lines; a boulder, partially submerged, yet protruding about two feet above ground. Fresh powder residue on the apex of the jagged boulder marks where the wheels of the aircraft hit as the pilot tried to land in the field.

The plane has gone nose over tail after battling with the boulder. Debris is scattered in a fan shape across the field. Working with the recovery team, the Lt walks towards the only part of the plane left, for the most part, intact - the fuselage lying at an angle in a furrow. The bodies of the pilot and student are still strapped into their seats, but gone are their heads, arms and legs.



The Lt notices that his right combat boot is sticking to something on the ground. As he begins to lift up his boot for a look, he observes something lying in the rubble of corn stubble and plane. He reaches down and picks it up. As he holds it up for inspection, the Lt realizes what is in his hand - a scalp with jet black hair attached to the right half of a face, including right ear. No bones are left in the face. Holding the face in his hand, he stares into what is left of the student ... his good friend.

Later at home that night, the Lt begins to clean the mud and

*grime from his boots. A big chunk of blob falls off onto the newspaper he has spread out. As he gazes at the clump, he knows that what is laying on that paper in his living room floor is a sizable portion of his friend's brain.*

*And I say, "O that I had wings like a dove!  
I would fly away and be at rest;*

- Psalms 55:6

## ► SHREDS OF THREADS ◀

**Shreds:** We are accustomed to responding to such incidents. We have our checklists, civilian maps, event logs, grease pencils, gridmaps. We have our special place on the "mat." We have our colleagues standing by to proceed to the "area of greatest spiritual need" according to the latest operating instructions. But when all is said and done; when the checklists are completed, what remains? Shreds - tattered threads of traumatized lives suffering horrific critical incidents. Threads of destruction and "what ifs." Threads of memories and lives lost. Threads of shock and sadness. What to do with all these threads?

**Threads:** What can we do so that the threads of our hearts and those around us stay together through crisis and trauma? What are we to do when we find ourselves groping all around the floor for even a single shred of familiarity? What defensive action can be taken against such offensive events? May this chapter build confidence to walk side by side with victims and survivors of crisis and trauma. May this chapter be a reminder of the assurance that:

*You who live in the shelter of the Most High,  
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,  
will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress;  
my God, in whom I trust."  
For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler  
and from the deadly pestilence;  
he will cover you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;*

- Psalm 91:1-4b

## ► GET OFF THE MAT! ◀

**Mitigation:** Recall the second goal of crisis/trauma ministry - mitigate critical incident impact on life function. If we have no knowledge that a functioning life is knee deep in a field of emotional blood, how can we provide mitigation for unknown emotional impacts on unknown individuals?

Who knew about the SP Lieutenant finding and handling his friend's facial shell? Only the recovery team member who took it from the Lt's grasp. Who knew that the friend's brain were caked on the Lt's combat boot? Only his wife who observed the mass fall from the boot as her husband said: "That's Drew's brain's." And why do we know the story and the impact now, after 25 years? Because he responded to these authors' invitation for "security police crisis and trauma war stories" from attenders at the 1994 Air Force Security Police Association Annual Conference.

No one but his wife knew that one of the crash victims was a friend. No one knew that he threw up for three days straight and barely made it through each of those work days without collapsing. No one knew that anything bothered him, or others responding to the crash site, because he assumed the standard unspoken military position that "all is well" as long as one keeps his or her own counsel. Twenty-five years is a long time to spend picking up shreds of threads from a critical incident.

**Theology of Groupness:** Already mentioned in the previous chapter, is the importance of training and interdisciplinary team involvement. The recommendation has been made to form one if one does not exist. If one does exist, carve your way onto the team before the call comes to go stand on your appointed spot, or wear your designated vest and/or hat. Civilian crisis response teams have learned the value of nobody freelancing at the scene; victims and survivors benefit from shared work - a theology of groupness - whereby crisis agencies work with instead of against each other in executing crisis intervention protocols. Air Force/Community mutual aid agreements demand that we be able to link-up with our civilian counterparts should they need our assistance or vice versa.

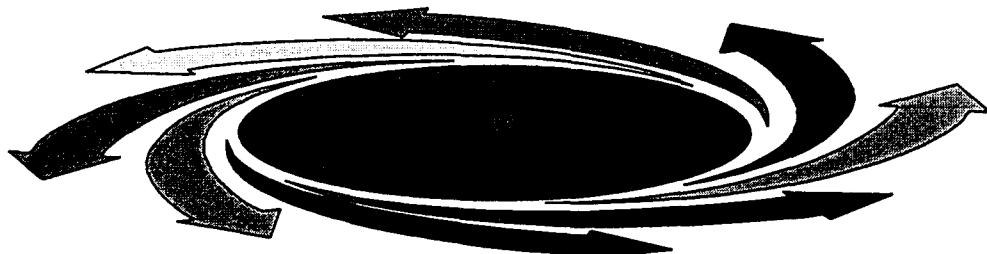
**Entreat Me Not to Leave You:** There is more to chaplain crisis response than standing on a DCG mat marked "HC." If we are to journey with the people struggling to thread their way along desert highways, low valleys, high mountains, rough ground and rugged terrain, we have to get in the desert, down into the valley, up the mountains, over rough patches and across rugged experiences.

*It's 1200 hours and thick black smoke billows at the end of runway 03. The one chaplain not out to lunch scrambles to the phone to call gym, club, dining hall, credit union, exchange, library, wherever the other chapel staff may be for the lunch break. The first chaplain to return is dispatched to the DCG. The DCG deploys to the on-scene commander at the entry control point. And the chaplain stands on the mat marked "HC."*

*The plane, full of fuel, crashes in an intense fireball. No one on the aircraft survives. The on-scene commander relieves the chaplain from the DCG since no one from the accident is alive to benefit from pastoral care. When the chaplain returns to the chapel, the chapel control center sends him right back to the DCG to minister to those who survived. Yes there are survivors of the crash, they are also the victims of the accident's trauma: the on-scene commander, DCG members, rescue workers directly fighting the fire, protecting the scene, and recovering body parts.*

**# Recommendation:** Rethink who needs to be the chapel's disaster control group representative, the one who stands on the mat. Traditionally this position has been for a chaplain. This is a position laden with supportive responsibility for relaying timely communication to the chapel control center about a crisis situation and status. It is a topflight function for our chapel support personnel in partnership with the crisis/trauma ministry chaplains. Chaplains can then be mobile to truly go where the people are face to face with the immediate shock of the crisis - with the fire department and recovery teams, even if it means getting suited up in protective gear that we have never had to or never wanted to wear. With the police who are usually first on-scene and last to leave the scene. With members of the disaster control group displaying common stressful reactions to uncommonly stressful and traumatic happenings. With the medics as they are at the accident site and as they triage and treat victims at the medical facility.

**Get Off:** We are convinced that chaplains getting off the mat during crisis means the chaplain getting unit and individual welcome mats rolled out following the crisis. When we provide for the "least of these;" when we offer spiritual sanctuary to the afflicted; when we do a little "tent-making" recovery work side by side with the laborers who have been in the crisis fields all day; when we stand by those in the fiery furnace of critical incident stress, we are one with another. We know. We see. We feel the emotions, too. This goes a long way towards being allowed to enter into a process of mitigating the impact of a critical incident on another's life functioning. Desert Storm and our work at Cook County Trauma Unit has taught us this valuable lesson. But to do so means stepping off the mat.



## ►THREADWORN, BUT NEVER ALONE◀

**Wear and Tear:** There it is, jumping out of the screen in full graphic view during the evening news. "Drug abusing mother tosses baby through glass of fourth story window because baby would not stop crying." There it is again, leaping off the inked newsprint with the reading of the first edition. "Family dog drags home a second severed human leg believed to be that of a woman in her early 20s." There it goes, bombarding the senses as hushed whispers make their rounds in the community. "Parents charged; their four dehydrated and malnourished children, ages four months to five years, found locked in dark unfurnished bedroom wearing only diapers and covered in feces."

There is much wear and tear going on in trying to make sense out of life in light of these occurrences. More and more our society is becoming all too familiar with traumatic situations. Our coping skills are being stretched and worn thin and overwhelmed by powerful explosive emotional incidents that occur suddenly and ever more frequently. Thus, sorrows need soothing, tears need drying, hurt hearts need mending, and doubts need reassuring.

**Smoldering Wicks:** There is much gnashing of teeth wondering where God can be in all of this. More and more we are called upon to find and bring God to the moment, to clearly identify God present in the critical moment. When hope begins to break apart in fields of emotional blood and the faith of another becomes like a smoldering wick, we are called upon to not let the faint glimpse of hope that might linger be blown out.

**Threadworn but not Threadbare:** No matter how threadworn the path along the road to crisis and trauma recovery, the journey is not threadbare of spiritual resources. No one is alone. God is there. The Almighty is present with us in the darkest of hours, and blesses us with guidance and help. And the community of faith is there, in the "Simons along victims' roads"; you know, those folk who emerge out of the crowds to steady when steps stagger, to carry when crisis crushes, to help transform what trauma trashes, and to note:

### **No, Never Alone**

*I've seen the lightening flashing  
And heard the thunder roll,  
I've felt sin's breakers dashing*

*Which tried to conquer my soul,  
I've heard the voice of my Savior,  
He bids me still fight on,  
He promised never to leave me,  
Never to leave me alone.  
No, never alone,  
No, never alone,  
He promised never to leave me,  
Never to leave me alone.*

- Author Unknown, p. 42, Sissom, 1994.

## ► VARIOUS KINDS OF EMOTIONAL BLOOD ◀

**No Discrimination:** If trauma and crisis know no boundaries, then anyone can become a victim; no discrimination here. This includes chaplains and chapel services support personnel, as well. Mitchell and Everly (p. 2, 1993) identify three levels of victims. Although their material focuses on emergency service personnel, the application fits well into the military scheme of chaplain crisis response and intervention. And, these definitions of categories of victims are recognized world-wide throughout the international crisis management community.



**Emotional Blood Let-ers:** The distinction between the definitions for each victim category or level is dependent upon the kind of exposure an individual has to a traumatizing and emotional blood spilling event. The direction, force, and volume of the spilling varies with each individual.

**Primary Victims:** These individuals have been most directly affected by a crisis, disaster or trauma experience: a pancaked soldier, an abused wife, a Lt retrieving the remains of his friend.

**DELUGE:** *Barry is on a remote assignment. It is Christmas Eve. He has joined the majority of assigned personnel at the club for a Christmas Eve party. Most present are inebriated. Most language is ribald. Most tempers were short. And then he*

erupts, swinging his arms uncontrollably and screaming obscenities while reaching for things to throw. The commander tries to calm Barry. The Lt draws his own hunting knife from it's sheath, just in case. Barry's friends try to restrain him before the Lt is compelled into action. But Barry tosses them off his back; rips, one by one, squares of acoustical ceiling tiles out of the ceiling frames and hurls them across the room. Eventually, Barry collapses. He is sedated and secured in a room for the night. For awhile, the remoteness of this place will not terrorize him.

**DRAIN:** Betty answers the knock at her quarters and is even more puzzled to see the security police there. First the sound and now the SPs. The security police explain that they are checking to see if a discharged round fired from next door entered the quarters. The color leaves Betty's face ... that sound awhile ago ... the baby! She becomes hysterical and runs upstairs to her infant's bedroom. She scoops the child up into her arms and sobs uncontrollably. Investigation reveals that the bullet passed between a closet wall shared with the adjoining quarters, sailed through a shirt, out the closet door, over the crib, and splintered a chest of drawers on the opposite side of the room. The bullet's path traveled a mere four inches above the child's body in the crib and directly in the path in which Betty stands while changing the baby. That's where she had been standing minutes before, and immediately prior to hearing the sound after leaving the little one's room.

**Secondary Victims:** These individuals are observers in some way of the "immediate traumatic effects" that have overwhelmed the coping mechanisms of primary victims: SP bystanders watching a pancaked soldier brutally yanked from beneath a truck, recovery teams retrieving body parts, 60 Marines who rescued fallen comrades.

**SPLATTER:** Marty is the fire chief. He has seen a lot of airmen come and go through his fire house. He is the boss and Dad to them all. He is always on the front line when there is a base emergency. And that is exactly where he is on the day an aircraft goes down at the end of runway 03 with 19 souls on board. The airship has exploded into a million pieces. Full tanks at take off make for fires of intense heat. Late into the evening, all the crew and passengers are accounted for except the two children traveling with their grandfather. There are no survivors but there is still an urgency to locate the children. The crash site is a pool of fuel and water and mud. By eleven at night, Marty calls off the search until morning. He gets into the huge fire engine and begins backing the machine out of the deep mud. As he backs out he notices a colored object in the trucks' tire tracks. Hopping out of the cab he shines a light on the object and then leans back against the truck. Tears well up in his eyes. He has found the children. They were



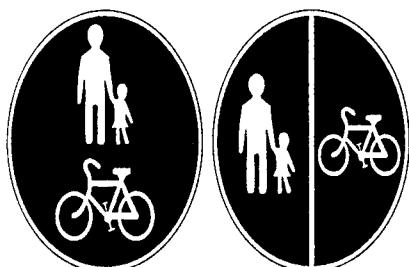
under the parked truck's front tires.

**SUBMERGE:** Janie arrives at the chapel, sobbing, two days after the same episode from Marty's case. She is holding her head in her hands and shaking back and forth. Over and over she repeats that she killed all those people on the plane that crashed. Now she cannot bring herself to transport anyone else to an aircraft. This does not set well with her supervisor. She tells her story. She transports the crew to the aircraft in the crew bus. Then she transports the passengers in the same bus. She talks with them all and wishes them all a great trip. Then she watches the plane take off down the runway, bounce three times, scrape the left wing, do cartwheels from wing tip to wing tip, explode, catch fire, and billow smoke. She screams out loud, "No, no, no!" But no one hears her. She is alone.

**Tertiary Victims:** These individuals are experiencing the trauma indirectly by subsequent exposure to the disaster scene/trauma or either to primary or secondary victims. Customarily, the third category of victims is not exposed to the immediate "first hand" elements of the traumatization because they were not exposed to the event's "shocking immediacy:" the military doctors receiving the pancaked soldier, the Lt's wife, 60 Marines' mental wake-up for a deployed chaplain.

**TRICKLE:** Pete, a 20 year old airman, works the missile sites and doesn't mind. He is studying college courses in his free time. He is the mealtime joke teller and has a never ending supply of 'back home in the back woods' stories to entertain anyone who will listen. He likes to fish and often takes a buddy with him. No fishing trip can end without the tale about the one that got away. He cooks, cleans, sings in the choir, dates Julie. He totes friends to church and they still follow him around at other times because he makes them feel important. But the day arrives when something is out of kilter. Pete is in the hospital. He has been there for several weeks. Together, he and the chaplain sit and try to figure out what happened. All they know is that one afternoon, Pete carried a loaded weapon into the shower room, propped the butt of the gun against a locker, put the barrel against his stomach, and pushed the trigger. And the chaplain wonders why he didn't know this young man better who sings in his service's choir, who cleans his house and mows his yard, who occasionally cooks up meals in his home with Julie assisting.

**RUN OVER:** The unknown sailor must have snapped. The previous night he has driven around and killed the occupants of two vehicles traveling in a nearby suburb. No one knows who he is at the time; not until early the next morning. His identity is finally revealed after he threatens a



supervisor. He barricades himself in his on-base quarters and begins to fire upon the children in the adjacent playground. Security personnel set up a line of defense between the gunman and children and evacuate children and residents from the area. The gunman then departs his quarters and returns to the previous night's suburb. Again he shoots at a vehicle; but this time he misses. Local police track him down and the gunman draws his weapon and plays for keeps. He is killed in a barrage of gunfire. The on-base playground remains deserted for three weeks. No one will play on it, no one will walk near it, no one will mention it.

**LEAK:** Mike is upset. His girlfriend is leaving him. He says he cannot live without her. He is unable to eat or sleep. Now at work he is in trouble for sloppy performance and showing up late. Mike comes to the chaplain to talk about his problem. And he is not pleased that his commander has made him a mental health appointment and scheduled him for Correctional Custody. After approximately 35 minutes, Mike informs the chaplain that he must leave for his mental health appointment. He also tells the chaplain that he cannot live without his girlfriend and cannot live through Correctional Custody. He will kill himself, he says, if he has to go to Correctional Custody. Before allowing him to leave, the chaplain obtains a commitment from Mike to not make any decision about taking action against his life until the two of them have had proper time to work together on Mike's problem. The next morning the first sergeant informs the chaplain that Mike shot himself the night before. The chaplain is no longer so comfortable with the recognized suicide intervention strategy to obtain a commitment of non-action from the client.

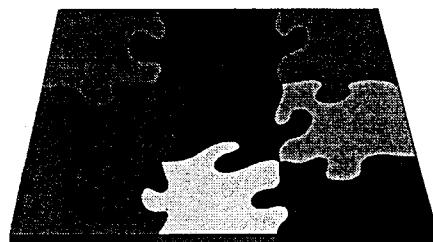
## ► CRISIS MANAGEMENT ◄

**Stressors:** At some point in every one of the 'emotional blood' stories just recounted, chaplains become involved in the crisis or with individuals victimized and traumatized by that crisis. We are part of the crisis intervention cadre that assists victims and survivors to better manage their crisis and subsequent reactions to overwhelming stressors that max out existing coping mechanisms.

**Turning Point:** Crisis management is stress management dealing with traumatic change. Life is not without stressors. As a crisis intervention professional's proverb says: "If you don't have stress, you are dead." Moderate stress is good for us; it is the period that we are most productive and experience positive and motivating change and effective goal achievement. But stress that brings about excessive change, that out

shoots our capabilities to cope with the stress, that burns us out and up is not good and definitely not welcomed. A crisis sounds a mass alarm to our coping mechanisms, and we go into overdrive to buffer ourselves from unpleasantries. Emotional traumata is a blow of such magnitude to the psyche that the victims cannot respond effectively and are never the same afterwards.

**Holistic Discipline:** Crisis management is not something kicked into action after a crisis occurs. It is a holistic discipline for chaplains responding to crisis and traumatic events. Pre-crisis education for self and community, preparation of assessment and intervention techniques, achievement of crisis/ministry goals before, during and after traumatic events, and crisis response geared to the various categories of victims are essential. These comprehensive actions go a long way in keeping the functional force functional, creating a safe environment for struggle with challenges to faith, values and hopes, dealing with fears and suffering, and reworking the pieces of life's puzzle - intertwining once more the threads of our own tapestry without undermining personal security or sense of autonomy.



## ► FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE ◀

**Duke It Out, Dodge the Bullet, Don't Move:** Mitchell (Mar '95 CISD Workshop, Midland, Tx) describes the responses to stress as either fight, flight, or freeze. Whether a traumatic event happens to you, or to someone you know or not, it is normal to feel it personally. A high tolerance for stress and ambiguity in life events is common for those who blaze a fighting trail through the event. For others, the event overwhelms their capability to cope effectively and they either drop out of the picture by their absence or silence, or remain frozen in their tracks unable to decide what they should do and when. Such reactions are normal when faced with abnormal situations. Such reactions mirror the way victims and survivors act out, think and feel.

**It Happens:** Pre-crisis education regarding various reactions to stress can help victims better manage their stress and regain control of their

emotions. The more that past, present, and potential victims know, the more victims will accept when "It Happens" that these reactions are very normal and there is nothing wrong with them if they experience these responses. There is nothing wrong with a chaplain, for that matter, who experiences normal stressful reactions to abnormal critical incidents. There are times many of us as caregivers lose focus. We forget our first job is to care for ourselves, to love ourselves, so that we may do the same unto others.

**Common Reactions:** Each person reacts differently to crisis and trauma, according to his or her own personality. A wide range of common feelings and reactions occur after an individual is involved in or hears about a traumatic event or critical incident. Past trauma experiences, previous degree and duration of personal loss, perception of terror and horror, and the character of the connection to the current event influence the reactions (Mitchell, Mar '94 CISD Workshop, Midland, Tx).

### Cognitive Reactions

difficulty remembering things  
hard time making decisions  
distortion of time  
confusion  
too many thoughts at once  
thinking about suicide  
intrusive images  
flashbacks  
replaying the event  
threatened assumptions that the world is not safe or less safe than before

### Physical Reactions

dizziness, headaches  
chest pains  
fatigue  
eating/appetite problems  
stomach problems  
vomiting/diarrhea  
sweating, rapid pulse  
back or neck pain  
startle reaction  
catch colds or flu

### Psychological Reactions

grief  
numbness  
feeling helpless, hopeless, powerless  
dependency  
feeling not yourself  
dread/fear/safety concerns  
feeling overwhelmed or vulnerable  
triggering of prior trauma or losses  
nightmares  
emotional rollercoaster

### Relational Reactions

withdrawing from others, or  
clinging to others  
irritability  
alienation from friends, family, co-workers who "don't understand"  
breakdown in trust  
false or distorted generalizations about others  
doubts about relationships  
changes in sexual activity  
being alternately demanding or distant with others

### Spiritual Reactions

loss of faith  
spiritual doubts  
despair  
questioning old beliefs  
lapses in spiritual practice  
withdrawal from worshiping community  
sense of the world being changed, out of kilter

## ► WALKING IN THEIR SANDALS ◀

*No one stands so tall  
as when that one stoops to help another  
or matches stride for stride with another*

- From an anonymous 'keen observer of life'

**Marshmallow Theology:** We may not be able to fill another's shoes, but we can walk beside that person as they respond to and overcome the blows crisis and trauma throw at emotional equilibrium. Something eventually gets to everyone. That is why Mitchell suggests we are and probably need to be a lot like marshmallows: tough on the outside but soft on the inside. We are not immune to vicarious suffering from another's crisis. But it does not mean that it needs to throw us into an emotional rigor mortis. It does not mean that we have to be afraid of the unanswerable question of why did God let this happen ... to me ... ? Sometimes comfort is a one way ministry. Sometimes it goes both ways. Sometimes comfort comes from the chaplain. Sometimes from another fellow struggler walking along and kicking up the dust with us during those wilderness obstacle courses of life that tug on our heartstrings.

**Trim the Sails:** We may not be able to direct the hurricane force winds of crisis that whips through our lives. But we can attempt to trim the sails so that our lives do not get blown too far off course and into uncharted waters. It is at this point that Mitchell's Critical Incident Stress Management group process, known as the "Mitchell Model," can be of paramount importance in keeping the functional force functional in spite of dysfunctional events. Whether prior to personnel experiencing trauma, while in the middle of crisis, going back on duty, departing the crisis, or working through the baggage of the crisis several days later, the group processes are intentional in structure and have been very effective in lessening the jolt of the trauma and returning normal people with normal reactions to normal stress to normal life functioning after their experience with an abnormal, horrific event.

**Marty**, the fire chief, exhibits a typical reaction by a rescue worker upon the event of a child's (in this case two childrens') death. His eyes well up with tears. Sometimes our eyes speak when our lips will not. Marty does not speak of the children after his first and labored groan when the truck lights hit the small bodies. He does not seek help after the incident to talk about what happened, how it affects him, and what he can do now as a result. The Mitchell Model addresses such issues. Not to proclaim whether or not Marty is doing his job correctly, for Mitchell's critical incident stress debriefing model is not an operational critique. We do that enough with much to spare in our "washes" after exercises and incidents. Marty's base does not have a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) Team available at the time of this crash. Nor is one available in the local community. Has Marty processed his feelings or repressed them? Only Marty knows.

**CISD Teams:** Trained teams of crisis intervention professionals are

forming throughout the states. The Coast Guard is sending every one of their chaplains to CISD certification seminars. The Navy has in place and operational two CISD teams, one in Virginia and the other in San Diego, to be dispatched anywhere Naval personnel are confronted with trauma and critical incidents. The Army has a team and is in the process of expanding that response capability. Our sister services team conceptualization is modeled after the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation's model, the Mitchell Model. The same team model that deployed to the 1995 Oklahoma City federal building bombing, the 1991 Gulf War aftermath in Kuwait, the 1982 Washington, DC National Airport crash (military responded from surrounding installations), the 1987 Baby Jessica rescue from an old well in Midland, Tx, the 1989 Sioux City United Airlines 232 crash in a corn field, the 1985 Mexico earthquake, the 1992 Los Angeles civil riots, the 1990 Charleston Hurricane Hugo, the 1993 Midwestern floods, and more tragedies than a soul wants to remember much less have to experience.

† Recommendation: It is not the purpose of this project to be a training/certification instrument for CISD. We have tried to be faithful to a spiritual focus throughout; a more difficult task, we have discovered. But we do have a three-fold recommendation regarding CISD. First, identify the incorporated team nearest you and add that team to the resources at your disposal during crisis intervention. Second, get certified in CISD. We did it ourselves during the year of study. Team members include peers of those impacted by the incident. Military members are our peers. There is no reason not to be trained as a team member. There is no reason not to know the language of CISD. Training occurs throughout the states all year. Contact the Foundation (address in resource appendix). Get trained. And third, get in sync with crisis intervention professionals' operations practiced throughout the world; begin to close the gap between ourselves and our sister services' deployable crisis operational CISD teams by responding to our own with our own around the world for whatever crisis batters their life tapestries and leaves dangling frayed threads of critical incident stress.

*Wash what is dirty.  
Water what is dry.  
Heal what is wounded.  
Warm what is cold.  
Guide what goes off the road.  
Love those who are least lovable  
because they need it most.*

- Author unknown

**The Mitchell Model:** Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and intervention in line with Jeff Mitchell's model (1993) is NOT therapy or a substitute for therapy. It is a peer driven and clinician directed group process following a traumatic event. It is a comprehensive, organized approach to crisis management. Appropriate for a wide range of traumatic situations, the process reduces and controls harmful aspects of stress associated with the events.

**Basic Model Threads:** Only an overview is provided here. Hopefully it will excite chaplains to want the certification training. And don't get knotted up when you hear and read that the "clinician" is a mental health worker. We have attended three conferences during this academic year, and here is what we have learned. Even though the optimal situation is a clinician led team, chaplains around the country are on teams, lead teams, form teams and train teams. The Foundation acknowledges that people need spiritual crisis intervention and are becoming more accepting of trained clergy's leadership participation. And who could have more spirit than the men and women of our country's military services to try to provide the best for our people so that they do not become bitter from life's snags?

**Before:** Pre-crisis education provides basic information about the nature of stress, what stressors exist, what individual factors can make stress worse, and the symptoms and self care of stress reactions to traumatizing situations. In addition, this strand of thread is extremely important because the word gets out that there are resources willing to provide services at the worst of times and for some of the toughest issues - faith, values, life; and they want to know how to reach those resources quick.



**At the Ring of the Crash Phone:** On-scene support services are provided while the event is still in progress. Virtually all of the time, this is done by peers - fellow fire fighters, cops, medics, recovery and decon team members. The main reason for this is that they are working side by side at the crisis. Chaplains can get closer to these folk. It is a good way to identify unit members who would make excellent peer CISD team members. When the call comes in announcing a crisis disaster, we minister through advising and counseling commanders, intervening briefly with response personnel showing signs of distress, and assistance for victims, survivors, and family members directly involved with the incident. It is a time to walk in the sandal prints of another. A time to start the walk where the victim is spiritually instead of dragging that one in line behind where our own spiritual and emotional footprints are planted.

**Immediately or Relatively Soon After Termination:** A defusing,

short form of the CISD debriefing, takes place. The defusing occurs after personnel are disengaged from the on-scene operations. Held in a neutral environment free from distractions, the group process is an opportunity to eliminate or confirm need for other debriefings and services, mitigate the impact of the event, reduce reaction symptoms of the situation, and accelerate the recovery process.

**Quick Informational and Rest Session:** A demobilization is a brief, short-gap intervention measure suggesting what will be immediately helpful during the next couple of days until a formal debriefing is provided (which always follows a demobilization). It is conducted as emergency personnel and non-emergency populations are being disengaged from the on-scene operations. It is a quick and dirty lecture after a large scale incident designed to provide transition from the world of the traumatic event and back to the world of the routine. After the talk, personnel are given nourishment, a period of rest, and then released to go home or return to normal duties.

**The Debriefing:** Critical Incident Stress Debriefing is a group meeting and discussion about a traumatic event. Combining intervention and education, the process is designed to assist personnel as quickly as possible to recover from stress associated with the incident. It is an organized seven step group process to mitigate the psychological impact of a traumatic event, prevent the subsequent development of a post-traumatic syndrome, and serve as an early identification mechanism for individuals needing professional mental health one on one follow-up.

**Aftermath:** Follow-up services are necessary after Critical Incident Stress Management (CISD) interventions. Outreach programs represent a broad spectrum of care: phone calls, small group meetings, commander and peer visits, one-on-one services, support groups, family contacts. And of course, the chaplain is there to blow on a cold heart without blowing out a wavering wick of the most minute hope. For those groping in the shadowlands of life's ripped and tangled threads of meaning, may comfort come from the One who is there, now, no matter the amount of emotional blood spilt or spilling.

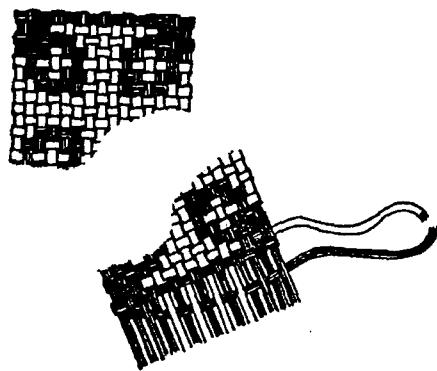
Thy word is a lamp unto my fee,  
And a light unto my path.

- Psalm 119:105

And let the people say, Amen.

**RENDING THE  
GARMENTS  
OF  
TRAUMA & CRISIS:  
Post Crisis/Trauma  
Ministry**

## ► RENDING ◀



*Give us your tired and weak  
and we will make them strong.  
Bring us your foreign songs  
And we will sing along.  
Leave us your broken dreams  
we'll give them time to mend.  
There is still a lot of love  
living in a promiseland.*

Willie Nelson  
"Living In The Promiseland"

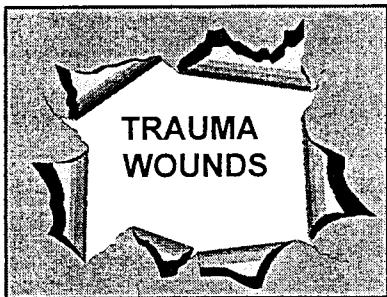
### Rend:

1. TO SEPARATE INTO PARTS WITH FORCE OR VIOLENCE.
  2. TO TEAR APART, SPLIT, OR DIVIDE.
  3. TO PULL OR TEAR VIOLENTLY.
  4. TO TEAR (ONE'S GARMENTS OR HAIR) IN GRIEF, RAGE, ETC.
  5. TO DISTRESS (THE HEART) WITH PAINFUL FEELINGS.
- (p. 1117, The Random House College Dictionary, 1974)

**Blunt Trauma = Blunt Theology:** The face is indistinguishable; tattered and clawed from the drug related beating with a square metal milk carton that leaves teeth tangling.... The image is unimaginable; speared through and through the neck with a billiards cue during a not-so-friendly game at the corner bar.... The scene is offensive; one gang arrives mourning death and failure to protect a friend, at the same time, the rival gang arrives celebrating the same death and the shooter's on-target fatal multiple gunshots..... The premise is senseless: torch car .... claim insurance .... get money; the outcome is senseless: torches car .... flames dart up legs .... gets fried and dies.... The body is demolished; arms broken, legs splintered, skull crushed all by the age of two and a half. Welcome to the Trauma and Burn Units. And God is here too?

*Those who were my enemies without cause hunted me like a bird.  
They tried to end my life in a pit and threw stones at me;  
the waters closed over my head, and I thought I was about to be cut off.  
I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit.*

- Lam 3:52-55



"Trauma" refers to situations in which you are rendered powerless and great danger is involved. Trauma in this sense refers to events involving death and injury or the possibility of death and injury. These events must be unusual and out of the ordinary, not events that are part of the normal course of life. Trauma also encompasses events of such intensity

or magnitude of horror that they would overtax any human being's ability to cope. (p. 8, Matsakis, 1992).

Trauma wounds us physically with the affliction of a sudden, violent force too great for our natural armor of skin and skull to prevent injury; or when the body's natural healing abilities are overloaded or shut down, and therefore cannot mend itself without medical intervention. Trauma wounds us emotionally and spiritually by assaulting our beliefs, values, dignity, security, relationships, and our purpose for living.

**Turning Point** - Crisis and traumatic events are turning points in lives of victims and survivors. Those lives are never the same afterwards. There is no going back. What happened, happened. There is no switching the channel, muting it perhaps. There is no hiding behind a paper, it is chock-full of other traumas that can reawaken the same reactions long after the original trauma has occurred. And yet, switching, hiding, turning off is exactly the way we choose to protect ourselves from horrendous situations.

As long as overwhelming experiences exist, spiritual healing shall never be complete. There is much to do to accelerate normal recovery in normal people experiencing normal reactions to abnormal events. And by the grace of the Almighty, hope, trust and community on this earthly promiseland will be found.

This chapter shares insight into spiritual mending: the rending of the fabric of crisis before it shreds to rags the fabric of our being; and, foreign song singing that the tired and weary may once more:

*...mount up with wings like eagles,  
...run and not be weary,  
...walk and not faint.*

Isaiah 40:31



## ►SPIRITUAL MENDING◄

Reading through his APRs, it is easy to see why SSgt Good has been considered a productive and valuable member of the unit. His former supervisors write that he is productive, self-motivated, intelligent and dedicated. They refer to him as a "self-starter," a term which attributes initiative and potential to its recipient. In the NCO's twelve years of service, he has never been in trouble or caused any; has been promoted on time; has been given increasing amounts of responsibility; and most important, has always carried out his duties in an impeccable manner. So why is it that in the few short months of his new assignment he has managed to get into and cause so much trouble? He gains an unacceptable amount of weight. He often is late for work. On the few occasions he arrives on time, his uniform is soiled and looks as though it has been slept in. The other troops no longer depend on him to do his share of the work. He sits at his desk for hours aimlessly shuffling papers. He stares out the window of his office. He snaps at anyone who dares to question his behavior.

SSgt Good is sent to a senior staff member and arrives at the appointment on time but with fire in his eyes and anger in his voice. He explains how he has been misused and abused since reporting to this new base. He is, he insists, a multi-talented NCO with an impeccable record who has been relegated to doing menial tasks which should be performed by lower-ranking members of the staff. He bristles when he is informed that he has been given increasingly less responsibility because he seems to his supervisors to be handling responsibility poorly or not at all. SSgt Good insists that there is nothing wrong with his performance and accuses the staff members of conspiring against him. When he blames the senior staff member of being less than observant and failing to see what is really happening, SSgt Good is fired and placed in a quiet remote office in another section of the base, to do nothing more than answer the phone and take messages.

Besides his work crisis, SSgt Good is experiencing crises at home. He is having trouble with both of his teen-age children. Their behavior in school has deteriorated since changing schools. They are failing in almost all their classes and their teachers have complained that they are uncooperative. His wife, too, has been depressed and is fighting with him almost every day.

Chaplain intervention puts a name to the traumatizing event that is now well over six months old but still has its devouring fangs imbedded into the Good family - 'Hurricane Rend Garment' and the reassignment from their "promiseland" AFB to a foreign land; to a strange house with no possessions except their vehicle, a few hundred bucks and the clothes on their backs; to strange people and not having had the chance to say good-bye to friends and co-workers, or know where they are and if they are all

right. Time and change of scenery has not mended the loss of peace and hope this family experienced. The fabric of their family tapestry is loosely stitched together and literally hangs by a thread. The patchwork begins to take hold when the staff helps the family relocate and contact their friends and co-workers; when furnishings and new wardrobes are donated; when the family is able to take leave and return for a final visit to "promiseland" AFB, and hopefully put their feelings to rest. Simply for a crisis event to be over does not mean that the trauma associated with the crisis is over. Simply for the crisis event to be over does not mean that the victims will just "grow out" of their trauma in time or that time will heal all wounds.

*"When a traumatic event occurs that represents nothing like the security of past events, and the individual's mind is unable effectively to answer basic questions of how and why it occurred and what it means, a crisis ensues. The event propels the individual into a traumatic state lasting for as long as the mind needs to reorganize, classify, and make sense of the traumatic event." (p.163, Gilliland & James, 1993)*

## ► SHELL SHOCKED ◀

*My heart has hurt a lot.  
My heart is very tattered right now.  
But remember that God uses broken things.  
Can't heal something not broken.*

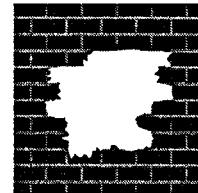
- From an anonymous "keen observer of life"

**Something Hurts A lot.** Hearts are tattered right now. A number of broken things are laying around. A retirement dream home no longer exists. Friends and co-workers are left behind somewhere, out of touch. Years of efforts collecting possessions, signs of success, are erased in an instant. School relationships are on the brink of disaster. Home relationships are not much better. Sgt Good and his family have been shell shocked to the core by a hurricane and subsequent evacuation to a new state, base, home and school. And likewise at work - fights, blaming, silence, estrangement from new co-workers.

Shouldn't someone have realized what was happening with this

family of extreme contradictions between the past "base X" and the current assignment? Like the Security Police Lt, Sgt Good is in a position of having experienced a traumatic event. Like the Security Police Lt, Sgt Good's co-workers knew that he was "back there" at the traumatizing hurricane's touch down. Like the Security Police Lt, Sgt Good keeps silent. Couldn't someone have asked or maybe questioned that being uprooted from home, dreams, and security may impact the family when they find themselves dumped in a strange land with no strings of attachment to place or people?

**Building Walls:** The traumatic event has happened. What's next? What do we know now; or what do we admit now to know about how people will react? What we have learned is that there are a lot of "Nehemias" who are victims of trauma. Great are the emotional, relational, and spiritual wall builders who attempt to keep the crisis incident separated from their current lives and obstructed for the rest of their lives by building a wall around the pain. Pain unseen can be pain unspoken. But it will not accomplish incident un-doing. Sooner or later the wall comes down. Sometimes brick by brick. Sometimes crashing in a flash of a trumpet's blast. Listen, tune in with foreign song singing ears. Look, focus in with trauma hindsight spectacles.



## ► SPIRITUAL BATTLE FATIGUE ◀

*To live and care in this world  
is to be confronted by disappointment.*

- From an anonymous "keen observer of life"

*Disappointment doesn't even begin to scratch the surface. Devastated is more like it. He has lived with them and cared for their spiritual well being since their deployment. He has shared his faith, hope, assurance and comfort with these young people. And now he thinks he has failed. The strength of his faith the unit has depended on is unraveling. He cannot make sense out of the traumatic event that destroyed over 20 lives, mangled another 20 or so, and spared him even the slightest scratch from the scud's*

*assault on their barracks walls.*

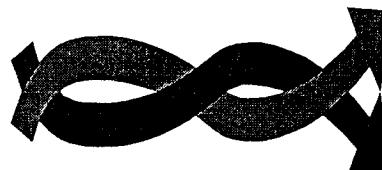
*At the medical facility he is causing a disturbance. He could not save his people from the scud, so he is going to make up for it. Now he is going to save his people from the sister service's imagined medical incompetencies that he loudly proclaims within earshot of his unit's wounded. He is going to direct the nurses what to feed his people, even though his menu is not in existence at this facility. He is going to get on their phones and issue a complaint regarding the delayed medical airlift, even though the phone number he intends to call cannot be connected by means of the tactical field phone. He barks orders to the medical staff that are unlawful and outside his purview.*

*The medical staff is becoming severely stressed by the directives and threats. They call for their service's chaplain to respond and assist them. Other patients need their attention and this man will not let them tend to them. This man is not the unit's commander .... he is the unit's chaplain!*

Even chaplains are not perfectly adjusted and emotionally healthy and totally in tune with their inner most beings every minute. Our reactions to crisis may very well be delayed because of the intensity of our ministry during the immediate impact of the incident. But it can wear us down to a nub. Will someone notice? Will someone hear? Will someone help with our healing?

## ► POST TRAUMATIC SCARS ◀

*Hell unchained*  
- Italian Proverb



### **The Trauma Response:**

*He was oppressed and afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth,  
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,  
and as a sheep before her shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.*

- Isaiah 53:7

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is characterized by symptoms of:

**Scars of Excessive Excitability and Arousal:** Sgt Good is not concentrating, in fact he is doing no work. He responds to questions regarding his performance with outbursts of anger and he is irritable with everything and everyone.

The chaplain is more a presence of hopelessness than hope. He is shouting and threatening the medical staff. He is jumpy and reacts to the slightest noise. He is on edge and close to going over the edge from constantly standing on guard for any indications that the next scud missile is inbound, which only he seems to be expecting.

**Scars of Avoidance, Withdrawal, Numbing:** The immediate visual identification of this trauma response symptom in the Marines is eerie. Marching single file into the dining hall, staring straight ahead, not talking to anyone, eating in silence, disinterest in the shopping trips into town, departing the dining hall the same way they entered clearly indicates how successful the Marines have been in avoiding thoughts or feelings associated with their trauma. Their blank stares, known as the 10,000 mile look (a far away look and then some) and their separating themselves to an area of the dining hall seldom occupied reflect their withdrawal emotionally and socially from others.

**Scars of Repetitive Intrusive Memories:** Recurrent and distressing recollections of the event are persistent for the chaplain. He feels the scud's impact, still. He hears the screams, the groans, the vacant breaths, still. His nightmares have been the same, he still cannot save his people, still. His manner of speaking sounds as though he is still back at the barracks site, still.

The families in the base housing area near the children's playground will not let their children play outside as before. They are convinced that some other person will use their children at play on the playground for target practice of a suitable way to express his or her own displeasures. Many of the families will not even drive off the base from that location. They will use the other route out of the housing area. Their dreams are of a reoccurrence of the story but this time with children bullet-ridden on the grounds.

**Scars of Minimum One Month Duration:** Betty and her husband have taken leave to visit family following the bullet through the wall episode.

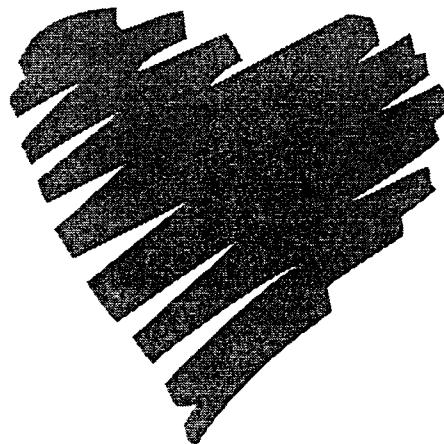
After two months, Betty will not move back into the house. The person who fired the gun next door no longer resides on the base. But that is not good enough for Betty. She does not feel secure anymore in that home.

## ► POSTVENTION ◀ intervention after CISD

**Rending of the Soul's Garments:** When the fabric of scar tissue is torn at constantly (withdrawal, nightmares, etc), the PTSD scars and the wounds of trauma are ripped open again and again, laying bare the hurt and internal death brought on by the incident. And there is no healing.

*Rend your heart and not your garments  
Return to the Lord your God,  
for he is gracious and compassionate,  
slow to anger and abounding in love,  
and he relents from sending calamity.*

- Joel 2:13



**Rending of the Heart:** Dr Lewis Andrews, a research psychologist, and Joel Osler Brende affirm the essential ingredient of spirituality in the recovery for traumatic victims and survivors. Spiritual mending is necessary for a return to baseline functioning.

Dr Andrews supports the position that understanding, healing, restoration and recovery happen on a spiritual level even if the results from the traumatic event are still present. Essential to good health is faith in a power higher than self and the attributes of honesty and tolerance within ourselves. It means that walls can come down.

Dr Brende describes the walls coming down as surrendering to God's will. He has designed a recovery program for traumatic survivors as a 12-step program of twelve themes ( p 8.1, Brende, 1994):

*power versus victimization  
seeking meaning in survival  
trust versus shame and doubt  
self-inventory  
understanding anger and range  
understanding fear  
guilt  
grief  
suicide versus commitment to life  
revenge versus forgiveness  
finding a purpose  
love and meaningful relationships*

Working with breaking the victimization cycle of Vietnam Veterans, Brende used the same process with each theme (p. 217, 218, Everly [ed], 1995):

*acknowledge the symptom  
seek help  
surrender the problem to God  
take action  
pray each day*

Healing comes when the tired and weak have someone to walk with them and help them regain their strength. Healing comes when together there is singing of the good old songs of faith when the words of crisis and the meter of trauma are foreign to our experiences and our understanding of life. Healing comes when the dreams of the broken can be mourned, reframed, and restored for living life in the tapestry of hope, trust, and community as it has become, even if the results of trauma are still present. Healing comes because there is still love and still a promise and still a bow splashed across the clouds after the storm that reconfirms we are not forgotten.

#### **Postvention Proverbs, From the Trauma Side:**

Chaplains do not need to be all powerful and all knowing; they can and will be on the receiving end now and again.

You will remember your first death. You will remember them all. Remember to be re-membered and re-membering in hope, trust, and community.

Often can't see PTSD and so sympathy and care goes to those with

physical injury. Don't forget PTSD. There is no cure, only treatment - talk it out, it's the only thing victims have if you will give it.

Include the spouse, parents, children, grandparents, and significant others in crisis/trauma ministry intervention and ritual. Anybody can hurt.

Make only the promises you can keep.

When everyone else is running from a crisis, crisis response teams are running in. Entreat ourselves not to leave then.

Be a bridge - not a wall - to survivors. Their same mountains and valleys and rough places and rugged terrain might be ours some day.

## ► NEVER THE SAME ◄

*Once you have been through the fire,  
you can never be burned again;  
scorched, maybe;  
burned? never!*

- From an anonymous "keen observer of life"

*A time to rend and a time to sew.  
- Eccl 3:7*

**A Time to Rend - New Songs:** The Lt cannot read or hear of a plane crash without seeing in his mind's eye the face of his friend. The chaplain cannot read or hear of a military vehicle accident without remembering the disgust of a flattened body yanked from under an over turned truck. Betty will not walk over to her infant's crib or to the changing table without wondering if another bullet will be coming through the closet wall at that moment. Mothers and children will not return to the playground without quickly sweeping the area from whence came the sailor-sniper's bullets. Janie will not watch another plane take off, period. The chaplain may never trust another "commitment" from another potential suicide case.

Without a song there ain't no hope at all. Where there is a song there is vision and life. The words may change, there may be pain, but there is also future and hope.



**A Time to Sew - New Golden Threads From the Master Tailor:**  
God shares our journey, whispers to us in our jubilation, speaks to us in our afflictions, and shouts to us through our pain. When the world seems to be ripping our live fabric in shreds all around us, the Lord is there to smooth out the tapestry, to connect the threads, and to sever the shroud of trauma's pain and power.

*Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me;  
O Lord, be my help.  
You turned my wailing into dancing;  
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,  
that my heart may sing to you and not be silent.  
O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever.*

- Psalm 30:11,12

**Mending and Sewing - The Song of Mending Broken Dreams:**

*The Weaver*

*Our lives are but fine weavings  
That God and we prepare,  
Each life becomes a fabric planned  
And fashioned in His care.*

*We may not always see just how  
The weavings intertwine,*

*But we must trust the Master's hand  
And follow His design*

*For He can view the pattern  
Upon the upper side  
While we must look from underneath  
And trust in Him to guide.*

*Sometimes a strand for sorrow  
is added to His plan,  
And though it's difficult for us  
We still must understand.*

*That it's He Who fills the shuttle.  
It's He Who knows what's best,  
So we must weave in patience  
And leave for Him the rest.*

*Not till the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly  
Shall God unroll the canvas  
And explain the reason why -*

*The dark threads are as needed  
in the Weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
in the pattern He has planned*

- Author Unknown, p. 90, Sissom, 19

We will be singers unto the Lord, mending broken dreams with the fine weavings showing a dark thread or two. We are instruments in the rituals of recovery. Let us worship and bow down together.

**WEAVING THE  
FABRIC  
OF  
TRAUMA & CRISIS:  
Rituals For Crisis/  
Trauma Ministry**

## ► WEAVINGS ◄



*From a distance there is harmony  
and it echoes through the land.  
It's the voice of hope  
It's the voice of peace  
It's the voice of every man.*

*From a distance we are instruments  
marching in a humble band.  
Playing songs of hope,  
Playing songs of peace,  
They're the songs of every man.*

*God is watching us  
God is watching us  
God is watching us  
From a distance.*

- Bette Midler      "From A Distance"



### Up-Close From a Distance:

*Everything about the April, 1995 bombing of Oklahoma City's federal building has been up-close. The blood, the bodies, the babies, the rubble, the rescue, the waiting, the praying, the crying, the memorial service - all up-close in amazing detail on the news, in the newspapers, and splashed over the covers in world news magazines. The up-close picture of the devastation further brought home military involvement via editions of services "Times." Base volunteers laboring side by side with rescue crews. Spouses, friends, unit members, retirees names' surfacing among the injured, killed, or missing. Gone is the recruiting office, and those who occupied it. Gone is the Social Security Office, and those who were visiting it. Gone is the credit union, and those who provided services within it. Gone is the heart-peace in the Heartland of America, and in the hearts of all Americans.*

*The bomb explodes and the two of us, with approximately 1000 crisis intervention personnel, sit in workshops at the Sheraton*

*Harbor Inn Hotel, Baltimore, MD, for an intense week's conference on Stress, Trauma, and Coping. Two hours after the explosion the conference is notified of the tragedy and a number of conference attenders and presenters begin packing up their bags and presentations as they are summoned to rendezvous with their crisis team members around the country already in route to the heart-shattered Heartland. A half hour later, those of us attending the Chaplain's Crisis Intervention Workshop have offered the conference our pastoral services and our meeting room as a respite and place for meditation and dialogue for those left behind to complete the conference in the safety and beauty of the surrounding unscathed Baltimore Inland Harbor.*

*We may not be up-close to the physical bomb site; but we certainly are up-close to the bombed-out emotions of crisis intervention professionals who can do nothing except watch the news and wait for word from dispatched colleagues. We may not be on the scene of the disaster voicing and singing peace and hope; but we certainly are instruments of that peace and hope for those with the disaster scene impaled into their mind's eye and trying to find a voice and sing a song of faith. And so, from a distance, from another time zone, from four states away as the crow flies, another ritual is born.*

**Instruments:** The distances may vary, the specific crises differ, the traumatic impact vacillate, but voices and songs echo the need for harmony to return throughout the land. To help make experiences more meaningful; to encourage expression of intense and powerful sentiments; to provide a safe format for dealing with change, God provides instruments of peace and hope to weave together the spiritual recovery of victims and survivors. We are the unique instruments of God's grace. From a distance, God may be watching. But this we can count on, up-close, God is watching and working through us.

**Imperfect Fabric:** Trying to explain who God is and how God is active in our lives on a "good" day, highlights how limited language is based on our human experiences and relationships. Certainly it is inadequate, but it's the best we have to work with and that's okay. Now try explaining who God is and how God is active in our lives on a "shoot down" day or a "bombing" day or an "ambush" day or any "crisis" day when very little that is expressed is "okay." That is what we are up against in fashioning rituals and God-language in relation to the human condition of traumatized and heart-broken spirits.

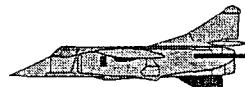
**Templates:** This chapter strives to offer ritual resources that you can use as is; or better yet, as templates to adapt for your particular crisis situation response. The gamut of suggestions ranges from public worship to personal devotion; community activities to one-on-one sessions; victims

to survivors; chaplains to laity. The symbols noted as [ ] found in several resources simply mean that we think this is a good place to name specifically what you are about, why you are gathered, or who is affected. By the grace of the Source, Comforter, and Renewer of our own faith, these resources are offered as a gift.

## ► RITUAL ESPRIT de CORPS ◀

**Ritual Defined:** Rituals are:

... culturally transmitted symbolic codes which are stylized, regularly repeated, dramatically structured, authoritatively designated and intrinsically valued. (p. 19, R.B. Browne, 1980)



**Paradigm:** The military is a ritual paradigm. A culture in and of itself, the military is awash with symbolic codes. Specific uniforms designate services and specialty codes within the branches. Unit patches and functional badges pronounce vocations and skill levels. Salutes recognize and render respect to those of greater rank. The list is impressive: the smoking lamp .... well, for those who have been around awhile...., the flag, the honor guard, the fly over, the base decals, the line badges, guard mount, tall or tap, the recalls, the officer calls, the commander's calls, the dental rips....; which is a good place to stop providing further examples.

***Esprit de corps:*** We participate in military rituals every duty day of our lives. They are highly structured behavioral matrixes stamped with authority by the organizational chains of command. The morale, the *esprit de corps*, of military team members is enhanced as the united action of our service men and women contribute to the security of our national defense and protect the freedom consummated by those in days past.

## ► RITUAL THEOLOGY ◀

**Ritual Defined:** Ritual is inherent to life, to faith traditions, to our approach to crisis/trauma ministry. We arrive into, live in, and depart from this world by prescribed ways of worshiping, celebrating, mourning as identified by life transitional rituals. Rituals provide a safe place to express

who we are, Whose we are, and what we are called to do in the name of **Allah or LORD or Jesus Christ or God Almighty or Our Father** or Θεός or אֱלֹהִים.

**Trauma Liturgy:** When the rap of crisis and trauma comes:

By providing a patterned, purposeful, predictable way of behaving ...., by symbolically focusing our attention upon norms, beliefs, and sentiments regarding our ultimate concerns, religious ritual gives us a way through crises that might otherwise overwhelm us. (p. 100. Willimon, 1979)

And we begin a ritual of work in the face of unspeakable traumatic events.

**Go Into the World:** Trauma Liturgy is initiated long before any worship service commences. The work of the people begins when they are blasted by an event that overwhelms their ability to cope; that confuses their values; that shakes the foundation of their belief systems. The ritual celebrating God's presence in the world at that given moment happens when we join victims and survivors on the frontline, smack dab in the middle of their crisis.

*New Orleans: The morning papers carry a picture of the commercial aircrash scene. And in the picture is a Catholic priest walking among the bodies, body parts, and twisted metal. Clothed in robe and stole and laden with prayer book, this man walks in the suffering of the human condition and offers blessings. Family members of the dead are appreciative; rescue workers rummaging through the wreckage know they are not alone. People have need for ritual.*

The image of "suffering servants" is an appropriate portrayal of us as we go into the traumatic experiences of others; for, in "being a part of the scene" we shall feel the afflicted tugging at the presence of the "holy" before them, and at the ultimate fringes of our own strength, resources, and beliefs.

**Incarnate Ministry:** What we do from the "on-scene" to the formal ceremony is critically important to the spiritual well-being of victims and survivors. As the comedian, Gilda Radner, battled the final stages of her fatal cancer, she realized "the hard way" that not every poem rhymes and not every story has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Crisis can take the rhythm out of our step. Trauma can detach us from any sense of who we are, what are our group attachments, and where we fit into the scheme of God's divinely crafted and rainbow protected creation.

An Indianapolis Denny's restaurant: A hostage situation with thirty captives is into the second hour. Negotiations are slow. Threats are voiced. Ultimatums are imposed. Gradually, and throughout the ordeal, small groups of hostages are released. Those released all exhibit the "10,000 mile stare" as if they are anywhere but here. Even with police swat team members on hand to guide them to safety, they have difficulty following directions and comprehending what is expected of them. They act as though the police might harm them. The fire department chaplain is incarnate and in position at the safe area behind another building. The chaplain's on-the-spot intervention helps bring safe meaning back to the victim's/survivors' world. Now they can begin to clearly recount their piece of the stories. Living "safe and secure from all alarms" means more than praying at chicken dinners.

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" happens only when the arms are there and available; even if it means our own life tapestry becomes snagged and suffers a rip now and then.

**Doing Ritual:** Rituals provide opportunities of empowerment so that a sense of harmony may be regained out of life crises; so that a baseline level of functioning may be achieved. Ritual is trauma recovery in the works. Engendering creativity, reestablishing personal boundaries, reaffirming standards and beliefs, unraveling burdensome secrets and failures describe the functions of rituals. And we do our chaplain work to see that these functions might bear fruit. Most frequently, our ceremonial "doing" of ritual in the aftermath of traumatic events takes place in worship as memorial services.

After doing five memorial rituals in as many months for the same squadron and for the same reason - suicides - what is there for the unit chaplain to do with this new one, suicide number six? He has to ask himself the same questions as the squadron members ask. What is wrong? Why is this the "suicide unit?" Do the memorial services regain meaning and purpose and faith; or do they convince most people and give permission to a few that another suicide will occur involving this squadron? Being creative and engendering creativity is hard work. Establishing boundaries and finding security within those boundaries is a precarious predicament. Affirming hope takes time to sink in and a willingness to trust. Is this next to impossible if the memorial service is the only time spent with the collective survivors - the squadron community - who are silently wondering who will be the next?

Unraveling who we are may move us from the safety of familiar trauma to the less than safe space of dealing with the effects our trauma. Doing rituals may unravel the ultimate fringes of our faith, strength, resources as the heart-strings of others leave our own life tapestry

threadworm.

**Out of the Wilderness:** No matter how often we are confronted with providing another service, offering healing counseling, or comforting the community, it gets no easier. After-Action Reports suffer finger marked sheets and curled corners from repeated searches for liturgy gems in order to design a relevant and powerful spiritual experience for ourselves and survivors. We want to escape out of the wilderness of crisis and trauma. We seek to break forth with new ideas to share and prepare us for the worst and best of ministry - to victims and survivors of incredible horrors. We strive to take care of ourselves that we can take care of others spiritually parched from emotional heatstroke. We long to do all that we can, and be satisfied with that.

*Memo from God -  
Do not feel totally personally irrevocably responsible for everything.  
That's my job.*

We long for this project to be a significant resource and idea stimulant for the Air Force Chaplaincy.

## ► TRAUMA RITUALS ◀

**Wordbound Thought:** A cold, snow blown night. A car flipped upside down. Three bodies scattered on the embankment and in the roadway. Motorists and pedestrians gather for a look. First one and then the other, and so on, pockets are rifled and personal affects scrutinized. A hand takes this wallet, another that set of keys. Someone grabs the pair of shoes right off the victim's feet as the paramedics arrive. Snow-caked stocking feet stick out the end of the hospital gurney's cover sheet. Just another typical Jan '95 Chicago, IL, Cook County Hospital Trauma Unit Friday night, and one more unidentified body is packaged for the morgue.

**Wordbound Thought Unleashed:**

### *My Child*

We don't know you by name  
No one is calling and asking for you by name.  
The accident presented them opportunity  
To rifle your pockets and strip your identity.  
What could they possibly have to lose  
If on this snowy night they at least left your shoes?

We don't know you by name  
No one is calling and asking for you by name.  
Surely someone knows who you are  
And wonders why you're not at home this late hour.  
Administratively, you have been christened "Unknown Steve"  
Here for now, at least, until you take your leave.

We don't know you by name  
Still, no one is calling and asking for you by name.  
Now we pray for your soul, departed "Unknown Steve"  
And prepare your body for eternal sleep.  
The white plastic wrap seems so undignified,  
But it's fastened with reverence, at least we tried....

We don't know you by name  
Won't someone call and ask for you by name?  
Yet, there is One who knows you,  
There is One who asks for you, too;  
'My child' is what He calls you by name,  
'My child' and "Unknown Steve", one and the same.

"Death by multiple blunt trauma," the hospital's official description of "Unknown Steve's" departures does not begin to touch the emotions of trauma staff working fervently to save a young life that not one person, family or friend, calls to inquire about. "Doesn't anybody care about him?" is echoed throughout the shift's six hours following "Unknown Steve's" admission. The harsh reality jumps out - not everybody has somebody to care about them.

Rituals "transform experience as wordbound thought cannot" (p.237, Rando, 1985). Simply stating that an accident occurred, the patient was robbed of identification and shoes after the accident, he died twenty minutes after arriving at the trauma unit, his identity is still unknown at the end of the shift, does not give word expression to the spectrum of thoughts and feelings experienced by the trauma staff. "My Child" is a transition from experience to wordbound thought. Penning the poem is a ritual in and of

itself. A transformation happens. In a therapeutic spilling of ink, the staff's feelings and thoughts are validated; their faith reaffirmed that there is Someone who cares no matter what.

*Ceremonies compartmentalize the review of the trauma, provide symbolic enactments of transformation of preciously shattered relationship, and reestablish connections among family and with society in general.* (p. 238, Johnson, Feldman, Lubin, Southwick, 1995)

**A Clinical Discipline:** Creating therapeutic rituals to deal with emotional and social chaos associated with grief, loss, threat, and change is now on the mental health professional's cutting edge approach to client treatment. Understood is the importance of ritualizing pre-crisis baseline functioning, of quickly returning to a baseline, and of ritualizing post-crisis functioning that develops even when results of trauma are still present.

This is a development of which we want to take note. Because, therapeutic rituals directed by mental health professionals propose to work toward spiritual healing that restores hope, trust, and community; the same restoration work we are about as chaplains.

**Our Singularly Unique Expertise:** We still are convinced that in service to the One who calls us and to the ones who call upon us, the chaplaincy has a singularly unique expertise to provide in response to critical incidents and traumatic events - spiritual healing that restores hope, trust, and community. Does that mean we are in direct competition with mental health professionals? No, but it does mean that God is no enemy to the clinical treatment process. And it does mean that we will be counseling with persons who are also needing and/or seeing mental health care providers.

**# Recommendation:** It is time to team up with base mental health workers for creating and implementing spiritual rituals of healing. And it is time for us to take a hard second look at rituals and what we need to do if we are the only "treatment process" resource available at a military location or the only one an individual seeks.

**Wordbound Thought, 2nd Version:** "Whoever he is, "Unknown Steve" isn't going to make it. Look at those feet! They are yellow!" These words give full expression to one trauma nurse's experiences of watching trauma unit deaths. On that night, these words give new expression to the chaplain's limited experience of death-watching. And, the ritual of spilling ink begins once more:

### *Shades*

*My thoughts were once filled with happy yellow things  
Bananas  
Daisies  
Keds tennis shoes  
Easter bonnets  
Sunrises  
Shiney new rain suits, too.*

*But that was yesterday  
And today is today  
Yellow is not the same as it was before  
Now it's also a shade of death knocking at the door.*

*"Just look at those feet,  
Come see what I mean,"  
A nurse beckons to me  
Where yellow is seen sticking out the end of a sheet.*

*His feet are that sickly shade of yellow:  
And here is another fellow  
For whom it shall soon be over  
When through this tumult he shall cross, forever.*

Ritual is the opportunity to work out a renewed sense and meaning of life and restore hope; to safely and appropriately "act out" internal thoughts and feelings by structuring and containing confusing disorganization and loss of control in order to restore trust; and to validate emotional and social chaos stress overload by joining with a great cloud of faith and family witnesses to restore a sense of community.

## ► TRAUMA LITURGY ◀

Liturgy rubrics for a service of worship in the aftermath of a crisis or traumatic event follow.

Use,  
adapt,  
rewrite,  
create.

## **CALL TO TRAUMA:**

### **Adapted from Psalm 43**

You are God my stronghold. Have you forgotten me?  
Why must I go about mourning, victimized by [this violence]?

Into my confusion and darkness, send forth your light  
and your truth, let them guide and comfort me; let them bring  
me to your holy mountain, out of this pit of [tears and bruises],  
to dwell in peace, your peace.

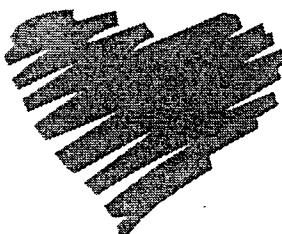
I come with the assembled to the altar, O God, my joy  
and my delight. I will praise and make music to you, my  
God, and celebrate your loving kindness which endures  
forever.

Why are you crestfallen, O my soul? Why so flustered  
within me? God is here. Turn to the rock of your salvation,  
have faith, hope in God.

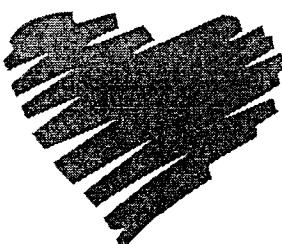
I will yet praise him, my ever-present Hope, my eternal  
Savior.

## INVOCATIONS:

Eternal God, who is the wind beneath our wings, the ever present help in the tumult of life's troubles, it is with confidence and with humble thanksgiving that we gather to claim the promise of your presence today among us. Where we go, you go. Go with us now through this ritual of healing. Lead us through the shadows of this valley of [grief]. Amen.



Everlasting God, who is Lord of our strength, Rock of our stronghold, Shield of our salvation; how unsearchable are your ways. When all else fails, you still are God. In death, you hold us in life. When life ends, you bring us to a new beginning. It is in confidence and with humble thanksgiving that we gather to claim the promise of your presence among us, and to cast our lives upon your mercy, and to help make sense out of the [senseless]. Amen.



In your loving kindness, compassionate One, you have spoken your word to us. You have spoken, and given form and beauty to the world. You have spoken, and given purpose to human life. You have spoken and redeemed us when we have turned from you. You have spoken, and out of pure grace freed us from death's victory. Speak to us now O Word that never fades. Speak to us that our faith may not fade in this hour of sadness and loss. Amen.

## **CALL TO CONFESSION:**

**Adapted from Psalm 4**

Answer me, I am calling to you God.  
I am screaming to you in my pain and grief.  
Do you not have room to hear me?  
Will you not give me relief from my agony?

To whom else can I lift up my voice?  
If I lift it up to those close to me, they turn to seek yesterdays.  
If I lift it up to those around me, they proclaim this is not real.  
Why do they only chase after what is a mirage and in the past?

I know that I am your child and you are my God.  
I know that you and you alone can tolerate my cries.  
I know that you do not run from my doubts, my display of hopelessness.  
I know that you are not frightened by my outbursts.

The anger within me will not stay contained.  
The horror of it all is gushing from my inner most being.  
The senselessness is shattering my heart's faith.  
I need help to be calm, to trust, to love again.

Will any good come out of this?  
Will your face shine upon me?  
Will my heart once more be filled with great joy?  
Will the nightmares give way to peaceful sleep?

Come Lord, help me through this.  
Fill me with a sense of your presence anew.  
Make me to feel safe in my world.  
Hear me as I confess my doubts and fears.

## **CONFSSION:**

### **Adapted from Psalm 23**

O Lord, I need a shepherd

for I feel as though my world has gone astray.

This crisis and its effect on me has made me question my faith;  
and raise the ugly question that maybe I want more than I believe you  
can give.

Forgive me.

I am not accustomed to walking along such jagged edges.

I don't like the feel of my world crumpling beneath me.

I know you are beside me.

I know that you walk where I walk.

But do we have to walk through this [death and destruction]?

At least I am not alone, although I feel alone sometimes.

There are times the pain, senselessness, and unknown overshadow me.

I cannot help it but I grasp for, instead of rest in your presence.

That is the best I can do for now

But for that I am grateful.

For I know you will not criticize me,

You will not ignore me,

You will not walk out on me.

You will find me in whatever emotional pit I may be in  
and fill me with faith sufficient.

And because you don't seem to mind a tear or doubt or two

I know that you will help me through.

Come Lord, dwell within me now and forever.

### **Christian**

Thanks be to you, Eternal God, for Christ Jesus who came to bear our burdens and carry our sorrows on the Cross before we ever have to bear them; who went down to the bottom of the pit of the human experience and understands what that is like; who rose victorious over the grave, robbing it of its power and sting; and who has opened the kingdom of heaven to all who put their trust in him. Be merciful to us, forgive our doubt. Console us, see us through the [horror], and forgive our anger. Guide us, forgive our faltering steps. Grant us peace, we pray. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF REMEMBRANCE:

On this day, especially, we come to meet you in praise and thanksgiving for the life of [our friend]. For every quality in his/her character and every grace in his/her temperament, and everything he/she was as a husband/wife, father/mother, son/daughter, leader, friend, confidant, and fellow human being, we give thanks. For the gift of his/her commitment to his/her country during conflict and calm, we give thanks. For his/her vision and venture in the preservation of peace for east and west and north and south, we give thanks. For his/her courage to acknowledge his/her strengths as well as weaknesses, we give thanks. And especially we thank you that for him/her all battles are over, and death is passed, and eternal peace and beauty beyond all human imagining awaits your servant. Amen.



Merciful God, bless those nearest to [this small one] who pick up the threads of life from this day forward. Bless us with the assurance that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come can separate us from your merciful care. Comfort us with purposeful vision and hopeful venture of eternal peace beyond all our imagining. Amen.



(Christian) Merciful Savior, bless those nearest to [this community] who pick up the stands of life from this day forward. Go where they go and abide where they abide. Make a straight path for them amid all the perplexities and loneliness of these days, and be their guide and companion through them all. In Jesus Christ, you promised many rooms within your eternal house. Give us faith to see beyond ourselves some sure sign of your kingdom come; and, where vision fails, to trust in your love which never fails. Lift our heavy sorrow and give us hope in Christ, so we may bravely walk our earthly way, and look forward to a glad reunion in the life that is to come. Amen.



Almighty God, as we leave this place, grant us to carry with us a spirit of thanksgiving for the life of your servant. Even as you receive him/her in your merciful presence, we also ask that you would be with family, friends, and all who most deeply mourn that they may be comforted. Strengthen and guide those who must face daily tasks without his/her helping hands. With our focus on the future, grant us the full measure of your wisdom, the vastness of your patience, and the far reaching power of your love. We pray as people, your people, in your holy name. Amen.

**HYMNS OF HOPE:** Due to the wide variety of hymnbooks used by chapels, but not by every chapel, we have not attempted to provide an inventory of hymns applicable to crisis/trauma ministry. However, familiar hymns may be incorporated into the service in creative ways. The example below is for those occasions where familiar hymns enhance the healing ritual, but when those present are not able to literally sing any words.

**LITANY OF HOPE**  
(Read Responsively)

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound.

***Breathe on us, breathe of God.***

We once were lost, but now are found; were blind but now we see.

***Spirit of God, descend upon our hearts.***

Twas grace that taught our hearts to fear, and grace our fears relieved;

***O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.***

How precious did that grace appear, the hour we first believed.

***Our souls magnify the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God.***

Through many dangers, toils, and snares we have already come;

***Savior, like a shepherd lead us.***

Grace has brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us on.

***God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour thy power.***

The Lord has promised good to us; His word our hope secures,

***Our eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.***

He will our shield and portion be as long as life endures.

***Our shelter from the stormy blast , and our eternal home.***

## PRAYERS OF A PEOPLE IN TRAUMA:

Almighty, loving, and compassionate God,  
We are troubled and disheartened by the events of the past few days.

In our confusion and our need we cry out to You  
And we are confident that you will feel the sadness in our voices.

We ask you to send your healing spirit to comfort the innocent victims of  
this tragedy.

We pray, Lord, that the sounds of this insane and desperate horror will  
also ring in the ears of decent people throughout this great land;  
And that the conscience of this nation which we love will once again be  
strengthened in its resolve and its determination to bestow safety,  
comfort, and lasting peace upon all its children.

Oh, God, bring healing to our hearts and minds;  
Deliver us from the evils which threaten to destroy us  
Comfort our sadness.

Strengthen our resolve to bring security to our families and our nation;  
Give to all our sisters and brothers a renewed faith and trust in you.



God Our Father,  
You created us out of love.  
Each of us is an individual with unique gifts  
and we serve you in different ways.  
And we are all created in your likeness.

Today we know how fragile we are,  
How helpless without you.  
You are our strength, our encouragement and our food.

You care for us with the heart of a mother for a newborn child.  
You wrap us in your perpetual love and mercy.  
Each day you lead us to new discoveries, new awareness  
And you are always reaching out to us, calling us to come closer, to be  
created again and again.

Teach us to depend on you  
As a child depends upon its parents.  
Teach us to trust that you will once again bring us to safety and rest.



Lord we come again to you with our own needs.  
We are brought to you by the very Spirit you have placed within us.  
    You watch over us and you read our hearts.  
You sense our fears and you know the questions we want to ask.  
    There is so much we do not understand.  
    You have heard it all before, Lord.  
But perhaps not from us, not at this time.

    We are filled with doubt and with need.  
Remember us now and the people who have come with us.  
    Bind our concerns together and make us one.  
Then, by your power, we will be what you make of us:  
    A living body  
    A seed that dies in fertile ground  
        children making our way home.



God Our Father  
You created us and called us to experience the wonder of your love.  
    You gave us life and you called each of us by name.  
    Help us to make holy this holy place you gave us.  
        You have called us to be a blessing  
            to those who are in pain,  
        To bring healing to a bleeding land,  
        To make whole this people torn apart.  
    Teach us to hope against all hopelessness.  
        Help us to lift each other up  
So that in faith and in gentleness and in peace  
    We may together renew the face of our earth.



O God of Life

Who has created us with hearts capable of love,

    May we cherish each other as gifts from God.

May we encourage each other, believe in each other,

    May we wipe the tears from each other's eyes,

May our life together be woven with gratefulness and praise,

    May patience and understanding bind us together

As we search for order during this time of chaos.

God, Most Holy, fill our spirits with faithfulness and commitment.

    Fill our hearts with mercy and justice and humility.

        Fill our souls with wonder.

O Giver of Gifts, who has given us joys new each day,

    Fill our morning with the sunrise and our darkness with a million stars.

O God of Promise, enable us to live out our possibilities in spite of this  
    tragedy.

    May we believe in miracles.

    May we dare to dream dreams.

    May we find rainbows in our paths.

    May we survive the sting of this travesty.

O God of Love, hold us all our days, and especially today.

In the name that is above all names, we ask this blessing.

## **THE WORD IN TRAUMA:**

### **Deut 32:10, 11**

In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste.  
He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the  
apple of his eye, like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers  
over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and  
carries them on its pinions.

### **2 Sam 22:32, 33, 36, 37**

For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the Rock  
except our God? It is God who arms me with strength and  
makes my way perfect. You give me your shield of victory;  
you stoop down to make me great. You broaden the path  
beneath me, so that my ankles do not turn.

### **Esth 8:6**

For how can I bear to see the calamity that is coming on my  
people? Or how can I bear to see the destruction of my  
kindred?

### **Ps 6:1, 2, 3**

O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger, or discipline me in  
your wrath. Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing;  
O LORD, heal me, for my bones are shaking with terror. My  
soul also is struck with terror, while you, O LORD --- how long?

### **Ps 25:16, 17, 18**

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and  
afflicted. The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me  
from my anguish. Look upon my affliction and my distress  
and take away all my transgression.

### **Ps 37:21,22**

Do not forsake me, O LORD; O my God, do not be far from me;  
make haste to help me, O LORD, my salvation.

**Ps 147:3**

He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds.

**Isa 41:10**

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

**Isa 40:30, 31**

Even youths will faint and be weary; and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

**Isa 46:4**

Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

**Jer 4:20**

Disaster follows disaster; the whole land lies in ruins. In an instant my tents are destroyed, my shelter in a moment.

**Lam 1:20**

See, O LORD, how distressed I am! I am in torment within, and in my heart I am disturbed.

**The Koran, 61:12**

He will forgive you your sins and admit you to gardens watered by running streams; He will lodge you in pleasant mansions in the gardens of Eden. That is the supreme triumph.

**Matt 11:28, 29**

Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls.

**Jn 14:18,19**

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live.

**Rom 5:3,4,5**

Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

**1 Cor 14:33**

God is a God not of disorder but of peace.

**1 Cor 15:51. 52**

Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed.

**2 Cor 4:8,9**

We are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

**Heb 13:6**

The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?

## **Rev 7:16, 17**

They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; and He will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

## **SERMON/HOMILY QUOTATIONS:**

A death-blow is a life-blow to some  
Who till they died, did not alive become.  
Who while they lived, had died,  
But when they died, eternity begun.

- Emily Dickinson

It is sweet to mingle tears with fear;  
griefs where they wound in solitude, wound more deeply.

- Seneca

The deepest principle of human nature is craving to be appreciated.

- William James

Throughout all the destruction there is still a human spirit that survives.

- Anonymous

It is not what happens to you that matters but how you take it.

- Seyle

Every crisis is a dangerous opportunity.

- JFK

CRISIS:  
DANGER AND OPPORTUNITY



That which does not destroy me makes me stronger.

- Nietzsche

Whatever you are trying to avoid will not go away until you confront it.

- Robert Anthony

Angry people are those who are most afraid.

- Robert Anthony

## AFFIRMATION:

### Litany of Affirmation (responsively) Adapted from Psalm 46

Through the upheavals of life, in spite of the [crises] of the moment;  
***The Lord is our Refuge and our Strength.***

Even in our doubt, and especially in our recovery from this tragic [event];  
***God is all-faithful and all-wise.***

Though our world seems to be crashing in on top of us; though our unanswered questions erode and shake the foundations of our faith;  
***The Almighty is still our Refuge and our Strength.***

Even when we are too numb to know what to do; even when we are too afraid to do what we know we can do;  
***God knows us and will help us.***

When we are awash with tears, when we are flooded by our emotions;  
***The God of Jacob, forever, is our Refuge and our Strength.***

Whether afflicted, devastated, oppressed or terrorized;  
***Our Refuge and our Strength will never desert us.***

The thunder of history's past storms has been defeated by God's mighty acts;

***The Exalted One's whisper shouts in the midst of today's thunderous storm: Be still and know that the Lord is with you.***

The Lord Almighty is with us.  
***The Lord, our Refuge and our Strength, is here with us now, and forever and ever. Amen.***

## **FAREWELL/CHARGE:**

Do not stand at my grave and weep;  
I am not there. I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow.  
I am the diamond glints on snow.  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.  
I am the gentle Autumn's rain.  
When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry;  
I am not here, I did not die.

- Unknown

## **BENEDICTION:**

*I believe in the sun,  
even when it is not shining.  
I believe in love,  
even when I don't feel it.  
I believe in God,  
even when He is silent*

- Carved on cellar wall in Cologne, Germany where Jews hid from the Nazis

\*

May the warmth of God's presence,  
The vastness of God's love,  
The hope-filled breath of God's Word  
Grant comfort through the threads of your shadowlands,  
Peace to mend tattered and broken hearts,  
And a faith that neither withers or fades, nor unravels or tightly knots.

- Adapted from the carved message on the Cologne, Germany cellar wall where Jews hid from the Nazis.

## ► FINDING A VOICE ◄

**Lamenting:** Talking about what happened is essential for healing and recovery to occur after crises and trauma have struck their crushing blow. When victims and survivors retell and reframe their torturous story, they confirm it really did happen; they identify precisely what the crisis is and what happened; they come to grips with what they have gone through personally and painfully. The need to tell is powerful. But sometimes the grimness of the event overpowers the ability to speak. Eyes may say, "help!" But lips may not be able to speak, "help!"

**Waiting:** The need to tell is just as powerful for the 60 Marines. The ability to do so for the Marines takes time. The chaplain begins a ritual of waiting with them as they eat; waiting to listen to the story which eventually comes. However, waiting is not the effective ritual ministry for the majority of victims and survivors without a voice. Other ritual patterns may be better suited for tearing into the knotted threads of silence.

**Rite of Bereavement:** When feelings and thoughts from loss of a loved one are silenced because of the inability to talk or the lack of opportunity to talk - other means of "speaking" can be used. To specifically name emotions associated with the loss; to recognize what has happened and what the individual has gone through and will have to face alone in the future; to structure a conversation to share with God that is not considered sacrilegious "acting out"; to practice hearing what happened so that the telling becomes easier, are the functions of rituals for personal devotion.

The rite of bereavement for a spouse illustrated below touches on the significance of the loss of a life-term partner. While the life term of one partner has come full term, the other partner's life term is not completed and no goes on alone. The rite may be repeated in its entirety each time, or used as a daily devotional by meditating on one letter's thought each day. And may the voice come.

## Rite of Bereavement for a Spouse

*Lord, hear me. Help me through this, particularly during these first days, this first month. I am confused and my emotions are out of control. There are so many things I am trying to work out, work through, and work around.*

- A* for ANGER over the time, love, and hugs ripped from my life
- B* for BEGINNING anew when the past was so much better
- C* for CHILL from the stillness and avoidance from others around me
- D* for DESIRES that now go unanswered
- E* for EMPTY house, bed, and heart that now is mine
- F* for FRIENDSHIPS that can be so helpful and so hurtful all at the same time
- G* for GENTLENESS in spirit, my nature yesterday, to be my nature again
- H* for HARSHNESS of the sight: couples in pews, at dinner, riding in the car
- I* for INJURIES I may inflict on others during my mourning
- J* for JEALOUSY of my privacy
- K* for KINDNESS in accepting the little things people do
- L* for LOVE of the children and family that seems stronger than my own
- M* for MENDING my broken spirit
- N* for NEWNESS of being alone again
- O* for OPENNESS to now doing things by myself
- P* for PATIENCE to not give up
- Q* for QUIET celebration of the times we shared
- R* for REVIVAL of my sense of value as a 'single' once more
- S* for STRENGTH when my memory is pricked by a place, smell, or item
- T* for TOUCH of your healing spirit upon my aching heart
- U* for UNDERSTANDING why: why death, why now, why him/her
- V* for VALIDATION of my own significant being
- W* for WOUNDS from words left unsaid when it's too late to say them
- X* for X that takes so much courage to mark in the blocks labeled "Widow(er)"
- Y* for YEARNINGS to be rid of the bad days from coping with this loss.
- Z* for ZEAL of life to again give thanks for the blessings I have and do receive

**Rewriting Life Stories:** Poems (like those about "Unknown Steve"), journals, books, lyrics are safe and appropriate means for expressing our life experiences. They also are excellent medias to share with others in order for the story to begin being recounted and vicariously witnessed by a supportive community.

1994, New York: *The backdraft fire takes the lives of three fire fighters. After 40 days of battle, the last one dies from his burns. Throughout his 40 days in a hellish wilderness of bleeding, debriding, and surgeries, his wife keeps a diary. She includes what is happening to her husband, herself, and the family. She includes what happened based on the other fire fighters' stories and her own visit to the scene. She includes intimate thoughts of carrying on without him and not wanting to face those moments. She contributes portions of her journal in a made for TV documentary about the backdraft, and which is used to train crisis intervention workers response to multiple line of duty deaths. Still, she does not tell the story eye to eye. She tells the story by reading word for word from the journal's worn pages. But she has found a voice.*

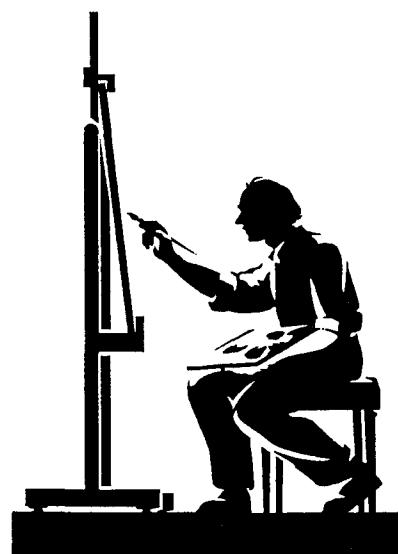
**Vomiting with My Hands:** Sometimes it is not what is said but the things victims and survivors do that tell a greater part of their horrific story.

*The voice which belongs to the words "I'm vomiting with my hands" is a self-taught artist. He crafts bronze statues. Each work of art is so precise in detail, that the emotions being expressed are inescapable on the subjects' faces. The eternally bronzed emotions of sadness, hopelessness, anger, shock, surprise, disgust, and fear worn by his myriad of creations are actually his emotions. He refuses to tell the story behind those emotions. The story happened over 20 years ago. He says he can not bear to tell it because the story becomes too real and he is back there in it. To think about his story makes him sick enough to vomit. He mourns and remembers through the gift of his hands, through the emotional vomiting with his hands. His hands are the voice for this Viet Nam veteran.*

**Art Therapy:** This therapeutic ritual can be an intense and freeing experience. An art therapist guides the ritual.

Self expression is chalked up, dabbed on,  
splashed over, and smeared across.  
Emotions are constrained to a piece of paper,  
but anything goes on that piece of paper.

Art therapist, Karen Lewis, conducted two session of art therapy with us. We specifically requested (not usually the pattern for clients) that she gear the sessions around



crisis and trauma. What amazed us was not that personal crises emerged on paper. That was the purpose. But we were surprised by the amount of information concerning the crises which could be gleaned from the art forms by a clinical art therapist.

‡ Recommendation: Because some clients have experienced extreme emotional outburst with propensity for self-injury during such sessions, it serves no purpose to be what we are not - art therapists. Establish a rapport between chaplain and an art therapist and tap into this valuable resource. Art therapy is not a stand-alone treatment. No one form of ritual is expected to be the cure-all for individual cases.

**Survivors Helping Survivors:** For some, finding a voice means having the opportunity to speak without being cut off, discounted, or ignored. Holocaust survivors are experiencing a "cutting off of their voices" because other voices are pronouncing loud and clear that the tragedy never happened. To not be believed is horrible and insulting. To be shut-up is disabling.

Support groups are a collective voice of the victimized. In the same manner as in our worship services, when an individual cannot sing the songs, another's uplifted notes can sing on that one's behalf. Support group members listen to each other recount a familiar and terrible story. They are not afraid to hear one more story when they are among kindred traumatized souls. No one is insulted, because their story will be accepted as true. One group which targets supporting survivors of military active duty deaths is TAPS, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Inc. TAPS point of contact is noted in Appendix C, Resources.

**Symbols:** Symbols are a natural part of our worship services. We even wear a symbol of our major faith tradition on the uniform. Yet, there are symbols outside our "religious protocols" that may be used effectively by pastoral crisis workers in "trauma protocols."

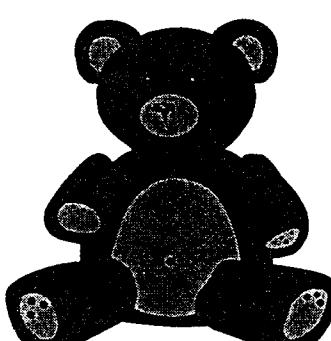
*A United Airlines flight departs Hawaii for the return trip to the states. A door blows off the aircraft as it is airborne over the ocean. Passengers are sucked out of the plane and dumped in the water below. All of the bodies are not recovered. It is impossible so to do. Two weeks after the crisis, one family cannot leave the area. They need some sort of closure. But there is no body and no hope of recovering the body. A veteran United Airlines crisis response team chief creates a ritual. A boat is hired. The family and the team chief board the boat and bringing along an enormous wreath. The boat ferries them to the ocean location directly below where the door came off and the passengers fell out. The family tosses the*

wreath in the ocean at that point. All eyes are glued on the wreath for a few moments of silence. Now the family can go home. They have buried their loved one with ceremony and among witnesses.

Tangible symbols enable tangible expressions of feelings and behaviors. The fighter plane remains partially buried in the desert at the point of impact, a constant reminder of how fragile life can be. The Indiana Ramada Inn in which a test fighter jet crashed through the front doors and six people died is used for rescue training by some of the same personnel responding to the original accident. Each mock rescue saves more lives in the fire fighters' minds.

*An interfaith memorial service is held for families and survivors of Oklahoma City's federal building bombing. Those who have lost a family member(s) are easily identified. They clutch blue stuffed teddy bears as though they*

*are clutching life itself. The fur becomes noticeably matted by the time the service ends. A long stemmed rose also identifies the families. And the petals begin to fall one by one from the shaking of weeping mourners. The bears and roses said more than human words could express at that time and in that place worshiping for that particular reason.*

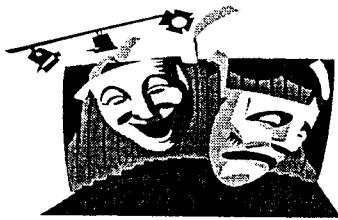


Lighting a candle, planting a tree, quilting a banner, standing up a flag by a monument are rituals. What seems insignificant to us may be the saving grace of hope, trust, and community for another in the doing of the ritual. For those who traveled to the big sandbox of Desert Storm, chem warfare training no longer seems like a yearly retraining curse; but an opportunity to remember, to relive, to give thanks for the life saving precaution ritualized again and again with each and every scud attack warning sounded. The Viet Nam Memorial Wall provides a backdrop of numerous rituals: laying on of hands over the name of a loved one or friend, laying down flowers for one who laid a life down in the line of duty, laying out letters never sent and words never shared, a gathering place of strangers with common dreams now shattered and familiar stories now retold and lost souls now somehow spiritually found and united in this place.

**Play it Again:** The defusings performed for units may be ritualized further by doing what we do after inspections - present a slide show presenting the troops at their best in crises response. Dealing with pain and victories, anguish and joys is the real world and the material for rituals. But

some will not deal with this material in front of others from the unit. A defusing can fuse out quickly if dialogue is the central method of communication. Activating as many senses as possible brings the story to the forefront to be dealt with and retold. The session may include:

1. Follow protocols to get pictures of the crisis response activity
2. Communicate beforehand the purpose of the pictures
  - a. the slides are not for an operational critique
  - b. the slides are to help functional personnel remain functional
3. Develop slides within one day of crisis response
4. Invite the unit members to the debrief personally
5. Assemble slides to alternate between gruesome shots and "hero" shots
6. Choreograph the slides with appropriate music: "One Moment In Time," by Whitney Houston is an appropriate piece of music to us
7. Start the debrief with the slides, then reframing the various pieces of the crisis, then offer self-care helps



## ► HERE COMES THE PARADE: REVNIONS ◀

**St Jude Parade:** 0800 hours on a Sunday morning and the downtown streets of Chicago are quiet. 0810 hours the same Sunday morning and sound of snare drums and bagpipes are resonating up the sky scrapers. 0815 hours that same Sunday morning looking out the 27th story window. Columns of city police officers and ceremonial band march through downtown and into Holy Name Catholic Church. Another year's parade and worship service has commenced to pay tribute to the memory of all Chicago police members killed in the line of duty. This year it is in honor of one who had graduated from the police academy only three days earlier. The trauma unit tried to save his life, but the bullet to the head was too much. Next year, the same parade will pay tribute to this young officer and another will be honored. And the band plays on.

**Flugtag:** The Ramstein air show disaster is remembered each year in emotional ceremonies held on the base at the erected stone monument and in the city of Ramstein's Catholic church. With every remembrance the same concerns are resurrected and ritualized by the town's people: no air shows, only static aircraft displays and a base open house; why can't the stone monument be moved into the town proper; why did it happen in the

first place?

**Hurricane Hugo:** The evacuation had been rapid. Many depart without knowing what happened to friends. Many had never planned to depart the area but to stay and plant retirement roots. With a few clothes, little cash, and maybe a car, military families head to hastily put together new assignments. Adjustments at the new bases are complex and stressful. Many must return home to the demolished evidence of Hugo's fury before they can emotionally leave for their new home assignments. Many must track down friends lost in the shuffle of evacuation before they can establish relationships with potential friends at the new base.

**Kuwait's Highway of Death:** The ground war is over, but the visual carnage along the Kuwait Highway keeps the war alive through the media and military personnel's snap shots. A group of older troops request air transportation to see for themselves. They line up and parade into the transport plane and begin their self made reunion ritual. From the air they see what they have been waiting for these past 20 years - closure of another conflict devoid of parades and celebrated returns, but one that has remained alive for them until this day. Soon they will be in a community organized parade and reunions of vets. Soon they will be returning as hero's and a chapter in their past can be laid to rest.

**New Life:** Rituals such as parades, reunions, and remembrance rites represent a strengthening of ties with family, friends, and the world. This individual and collective renewal of life gives symbolic expression that there is hope, trust, and life in the community beyond the snags, pulls and tears from crisis and trauma to our life's fabric of being and believing. No matter what happens God is still God and we are still the people of the great I Am.

## ► RITUALS FOR THE TRAUMA CHAPLAIN ◄

### Prayer for a Suffering Servant

O Lord, help me be an instrument of your goodness  
in the rubble of this destruction.

Attune my ears to hear the stories,  
the horrific nightmarish tales retold.

Assure my presence be a positive intrusion  
in lives of faith as well as those in loss of faith.

Grant me courage in the face of the unanswerable "Why?"  
to admit, "I don't know, either."

Lead me not into temptation to try and stop the crisis experience,  
for I cannot take away loss and hurt, only share in it.

Strengthen me as I enter areas beyond my comfort zone  
where I don't want to be, yet, where your people go.

Remind me that if another can hurt then I can hurt,  
so let me do the best to care for myself and others.

Allow me to be a presence of hope  
in this now seemly hopeless situation;

A speck of safety  
in this dangerous environment.

And, Lord, may all that I do  
be done to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

### Let No One Be Forgotten

God and the soldier  
All Men adore  
in time of trouble  
And no more.

For when war is over  
And all things righted  
God is neglected  
The old soldier slighted.

- inscribed by an anonymous soldier  
on an old stone sentry box at  
Gibraltar

### RITUAL FROM THE LIGHTER SIDE

Don't always take yourself seriously all the time in all situations before all people:

*There's an excellent rule  
I have learned in life's school,  
And I'm ready to set it before you.  
When you're heavy at heart  
And your world falls apart,  
Do not pity yourself, I implore you.  
No, up with your chin,  
Meet bad luck with a grin,  
and try this infallible trick:  
It never will fail you  
Whatever may ail you -  
DO SOMETHING FOR SOMEBODY QUICK!*

*OH -  
Do something for somebody quick,  
I will banish your cares in a tick  
Don't fret about you  
There's a Good Deed to do -  
DO SOMETHING FOR SOMEBODY QUICK!*

- Robertson Davies  
Murther & Walking Spirits

## ~APPENDIX A~

### ■ George Fitchett's 7x7 Spiritual Assessment Model

#### Holistic Dimensions

1. **Medical** What are the medical facts? Are they having an impact on the spiritual well-being or functioning?
2. **Psychological** Is there a history of or current psychological problems? What treatment is being administered?
3. **Psychosocial** What is the past history - family, childhood, adolescence, schooling, adulthood, major crisis? What is the present circumstance - living condition, relationships, employment, financial resources, leisure interest?
4. **Family Systems** What is the current immediate family patterns or those traceable back over several generations?
5. **Ethnic and Cultural** What racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds influence behavior?
6. **Societal Issues** Is a social institution or particular cultural pattern contributing to the condition?
7. ***spiritual*** See the seven spiritual dimensions below.

#### Spiritual Dimension

1. **Beliefs and Meaning** What is in the story, symbols, language, changes, religious traditions that express meaning and purpose in life?
2. **Vocation and Consequences** What duties and obligations must be fulfilled?
3. **Experience and Emotion** Have there been any direct encounters with the divine or the demonic, with near-death experiences? What are the emotions?
4. **Courage and Growth** What happens when new life experiences challenge existing beliefs?
5. **Ritual and Practice** What rituals and practices give meaning and sense of purpose; has there been a change or inability to perform the rituals and practices?
6. **Community** What is the size, location and structure of communities, formal or informal, that share in the individual's belief and meaning in life, ritual, and practice?
7. **Authority and Guidance** Where does the individual seek authority and guidance - from counselor, self, or other significant persons in individual's life?

### ■ THE TRIAGE ASSESSMENT FORM FOR CRISIS INTERVENTION

Permission has been granted from the designers for the form to appear in this project. Myer and Ottens recommend using Gilliland and James's, Crisis Intervention Strategies, pages 79-84, for understanding the scales and scoring formulas.

## TRIAGE ASSESSMENT FORM: CRISIS INTERVENTION\*

©R.A. Myer, R.C. Williams, A.J. Ottens, & A.E. Schmidt

### CRISIS EVENT:

Identify and describe briefly the crisis situation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

Identify and describe briefly the affect that is present. (If more than one affect is experienced, rate with #1 being primary, #2 secondary, #3 tertiary.)

ANGER/HOSTILITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ANXIETY/FEAR: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SADNESS/MELANCHOLY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Affective Severity Scale

Circle the number that most closely corresponds with client's reaction to crisis.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Impairment	Minimal Impairment	Low Impairment	Moderate Impairment	Marked Impairment	Severe Impairment				
Stable mood with normal variation of affect appropriate to daily functioning.	Affect appropriate to situation. Brief periods during which negative mood is experienced slightly more intensely than situation warrants. Emotions are substantially under client control.	Affect appropriate to situation but increasingly longer periods during which negative mood is experienced slightly more intensely than situation warrants. Client perceives emotions as being substantially under control.	Affect may be incongruent with situation. Extended periods of intense negative moods. Mood is experienced noticeably more intensely than situation warrants. Lability of affect may be present. Effort required to control emotions.	Negative affect experienced at markedly higher level than situation warrants. Affects may be obviously incongruent with situation. Mood swings, if occurring, are pronounced. Onset of negative moods are perceived by client as not being under volitional control.	Decompensation or depersonalization evident.				

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## COGNITIVE DOMAIN

Identify if a transgression, threat, or loss has occurred in the following areas and describe briefly. (If more than one cognitive response occurs, rate with #1 being primary, #2 secondary, #3 tertiary.)

PHYSICAL (food, water, safety, shelter, etc.):

TRANSGRESSION \_\_\_\_\_ THREAT \_\_\_\_\_ LOSS \_\_\_\_\_

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PSYCHOLOGICAL (self-concept, emotional well being, identity, etc.):

TRANSGRESSION \_\_\_\_\_ THREAT \_\_\_\_\_ LOSS \_\_\_\_\_

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---

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS (family, friends, co-workers, etc.):

TRANSGRESSION \_\_\_\_\_ THREAT \_\_\_\_\_ LOSS \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

MORAL/SPIRITUAL (personal integrity, values, belief system, etc.):

TRANSGRESSION \_\_\_\_\_ THREAT \_\_\_\_\_ LOSS \_\_\_\_\_

---



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### Cognitive Severity Scale

Circle the number that most closely corresponds with client's reaction to crisis.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Impairment	Minimal Impairment	Low Impairment	Moderate Impairment		Marked Impairment		Severe Impairment		
Concentration intact. Client displays normal problem-solving and decision-making abilities. Client's perception and interpretation of crisis event match with reality of situation.	Client's thoughts may drift to crisis event but focus of thoughts is under volitional control. Problem-solving and decision-making abilities minimally affected. Client's perception and interpretation of crisis event substantially match with reality of situation.	Occasional disturbance of concentration. Client perceives diminished control over thoughts of crisis event. Client experiences recurrent difficulties with problem-solving and decision-making abilities. Client's perception and interpretation of crisis event may differ in some respects with reality of situation.	Frequent disturbance of concentration. Intrusive thoughts of crisis event with limited control. Problem-solving and decision-making abilities adversely affected by obsessiveness, self-doubt, confusion. Client's perception and interpretation of crisis event may differ noticeably with reality of situation.		Client plagued by intrusiveness of thoughts regarding crisis event. The appropriateness of client's problem-solving and decision-making abilities likely adversely affected by obsessiveness, self-doubt, confusion. Client's perception and interpretation of crisis event may differ substantially with reality of situation.		Gross inability to concentrate on anything except crisis event. Client so afflicted by obsessiveness, self-doubt, confusion that problem-solving and decision-making abilities have "shut down." Client's perception and interpretation of crisis event may differ so substantially from reality of situation as to constitute threat to client's welfare.		

## **BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN**

Identify and describe briefly which behavior is currently being used. (If more than one behavior is utilized, rate with #1 being primary, #2 secondary, #3 tertiary.)

APPROACH: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

AVOIDANCE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IMMOBILITY: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Behavioral Severity Scale**

Circle the number that most closely corresponds with client's reaction to crisis.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No Impairment	Minimal Impairment	Low Impairment	Moderate Impairment	Marked Impairment	Severe Impairment				
Coping behavior appropriate to crisis event. Client performs those tasks necessary for daily functioning.	Occasional utilization of ineffective coping behaviors. Client performs those tasks necessary for daily functioning, but does so with noticeable effort.	Occasional utilization of ineffective coping behaviors. Client neglects some tasks necessary for daily functioning, performs others with decreasing effectiveness.	Client displays coping behaviors that may be ineffective and maladaptive. Ability to perform tasks necessary for daily functioning is noticeably compromised.	Client displays coping behaviors that are likely to exacerbate crisis situation. Ability to perform tasks necessary for daily functioning is markedly absent.	Behavior is erratic, unpredictable. Client's behaviors are harmful to self and/or others.				

## **DOMAIN SEVERITY SCALE SUMMARY**

Affective \_\_\_\_\_

Cognitive \_\_\_\_\_

Behavioral \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## ■ STORY THEOLOGY: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION OF A STORY

Listen to the implications of the stories of your parishioners and let their stories guide you to their theology. In ministry this moves you out of the psychological reflection mode into the spiritual meaning making reflection mode. Ask questions that help you understand their story better.

### 1. Experience Near reflections

- share feelings associated with the story
- share associations with the story
- share identification with the story or storyteller/related stories

### 2. Is there an Image that is at the core of the story for you?

- before making extensive interpretations, is there an image that holds your attention? An expanded metaphor? Or perhaps there is a key message that the story represents?

### 3. Experience distant reflections

- what is the meaning in/of this story?
- what are the connections between this story and other themes, issues or symbols?
- what theological themes, biblical stories, or stories from other religious traditions are raised for you as you hear and reflect upon this story?
- a way to perhaps look at the revelatory significance; how is God present in this story?

### 4. Pastoral Care Reflections

- what are the implications for pastoral care, ministry, theology, rituals?
- if this is a story being told to you by a patient or parishioner, looking at the above questions might mean asking the following:

Is the person at odds or at peace with their tradition?

What are the possible areas of conflict? Areas for reconciliation?

How might you be seen in light of their experience with God or Church?

How does this story (if it relates) prepare them for the current crisis?

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Chicago, IL 60612

## ~ APPENDIX B ~

### **RECOMMENDATIONS LISTING:**

Crisis/Trauma Interdisciplinary Teams	p. 6
Spiritual Assessment Tool for Crisis/Trauma Ministry	p. 10
Chapel Disaster Control Group Representation	p. 29
Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team Training	p. 39
Chaplain and Mental Health Professionals Teaming Up for Spiritual Rituals	p. 63
Art Therapy	p. 84

## **RESOURCES**

### **ASSESSMENTS:**

Fitchett, George (1993). Assessing Spiritual Needs: A Guide for Caregivers, Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg.

Jonsen, Albert R., Siegler, Mark, Winslade, William J. (1992). Clinical Ethics: A Practical Approach to Ethical Decisions in Clinical Medicine, 3rd edition, New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

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### **INTERVENTION STRATEGIES:**

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## **ORGANIZATIONS**

International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc. 5018 Dorsey Hall Dr, Suite 104, Ellicott City, MD, 21042, (410) 730-4311. CISD and Peer Techniques Training, Consultation, Membership.

International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. (708) 480-9080. Journal of Traumatic Stress subscriptions.

TAPS, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Inc. % Bonnie Carroll, 807 G. Street, Suite 250 Anchorage, AK 99501, (907)272-TAPS. Support for survivors of line of duty deaths.

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